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American Spirit

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

MAY/JUNE 2019

North Carolina's
HOUSE IN THE
HORSESHOE

MEMPHIS
Rise of a
River Town

FOUNDING
BOTANIST
David Hosack

TOMATOES
IN THE
COLONIAL ERA

THE OLD BRICK CAPITOL



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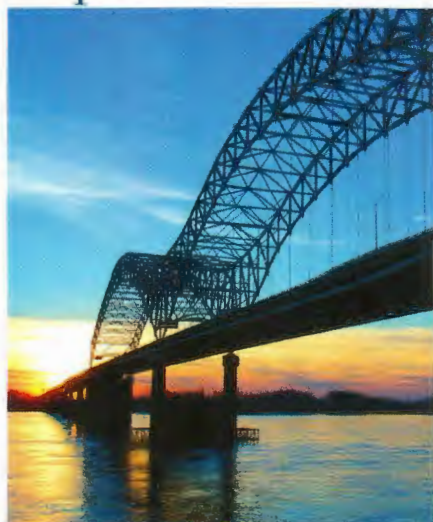
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Though he fought many battles as a Patriot in the Massachusetts militia, Eleazer Blake spent his post-war life in Rindge, N.H. The town's historical society is dedicated to preserving his memory and treasures such as his diary and discharge papers signed by George Washington.

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR

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About the cover:
U.S. Capitol Building, Washington, D.C.
© Getty Images



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From the President General

May this final issue of the Dillon Administration give readers as much joy and inspiration as I have gained from the magazine during my term as President General. I am proud of the stories we have told honoring the National Society's enduring tenets of historic preservation, education and patriotism.

This issue marks another farewell that I would be remiss not to acknowledge. For 15 years, Denise Doring VanBuren has been more than the editor in chief



of *American Spirit*. Her guidance has helped to define the publication's modern voice, and her boundless enthusiasm for American history and the National Society have pushed the Magazine Team to produce work worthy of the DAR's world-class reputation. Although she will no longer serve as editor, *American Spirit* will bear the mark of her influence proudly for years to come.

Our cover story celebrates the 200th anniversary of Congress' return to the restored U.S. Capitol after it was torched by the British in 1814. Congress almost relocated the capital after the War of 1812, but locals lobbied hard to keep it in Washington, D.C. They succeeded, though it took five years to reconstruct the building to the point where it was usable again. Today the gleaming Capitol is one of the world's most recognizable buildings.

A brilliant surgeon and botanist, David Hosack was personal physician to Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr, one of the few things the two men agreed on. But he's more than merely a footnote to the story of the infamous duel. A Columbia professor, Hosack dreamed of inspiring Americans to pursue botany, medicine and the sciences. Despite constant resistance, he started Elgin Botanic Garden in 1810 on 20 acres of Manhattan farmland. Today the remnants of his garden lie in the heart of New York's midtown, buried beneath Rockefeller Center.

Brother-and-sister team Nancy Bruns and Lewis Payne, seventh-generation salt harvesters, have revived their ancestors' tradition of extracting salt from an ancient ocean trapped below the Appalachian Mountains. Our feature tells the story of this family business based in West Virginia's Kanawha Valley and the history of the salt industry that flourished in the early 19th century in what was then southern Virginia.

In case that feature didn't make you hungry enough, we also dive into the history of the tomato in America. In Colonial times, the widespread belief was that tomatoes were poisonous and absolutely not something that should be eaten. Thomas Jefferson and his friends Philip Mazzei and Dr. John de Sequerra helped introduce the concept of tomatoes as a healthy and delicious food.

On the occasion of Memphis' 200th anniversary, *Spirited Adventures* visits Tennessee's tuneful river city, and *Historic Homes* peers into the Revolutionary backstory of North Carolina's Alston House, recently supported by a DAR Special Projects Grant. Our Patriots salutes Eleazer Blake, whose daguerreotype, diary and other effects are preserved in Rindge, N.H.

As always, there's lots more in pages to come. Thank you for reading and supporting *American Spirit*!

Ann Turner Dillon

Making WAVES

Rhode Island Daughter recalls her World War II service

Erna Schoen Bentley was 21 years old when the United States entered World War II, and almost immediately she looked for a chance to contribute. As the oldest daughter in a family with no sons, she saw it as her duty to serve. She also thought it would be a nice change of pace from the sleepy Connecticut town she called home. In March 1943, that opportunity came. She and a friend went to New York City to sign up for the women's branch of the U.S. Naval Reserves, known as Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES). "We went there to do it together, but my friend had a change of heart and did not enlist," Mrs. Bentley recalled.

On April 9, 1943, Mrs. Bentley arrived at the U.S. Naval Training School in Cedar Falls, Iowa. After training there and at the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard, she reported for duty at the Naval Communications Annex in Washington as a communications specialist in cryptography. There she and 4,000 other women spent the duration of the war working to decode secret messages from the German and Japanese governments.

It's been nearly 75 years since the war ended, but Mrs. Bentley still won't discuss details of her top-secret assignment. It's clear, though, that her memories of that time are still vivid.

Take, for example, the evening spent aboard the USS *Wisconsin*. At

the invitation of their former commanding officer, Mrs. Bentley's unit boarded the battleship for dinner and a tour. "Until that night, I never realized just how enormous the guns were on a ship," she recalls. "We were not allowed to talk to anyone about our whereabouts or activities for three days afterward [to ensure] ship security."

Or the time she and her friend, on leave, decided to skip their usual train stop at Hartford, Conn., and continue to the end of the line, to Montreal, Canada. While there, she met her



future husband, David, who invited her to have dinner at his mother's house. A long-distance courtship ensued.

Her favorite story involves removing a nest of roosting pigeons outside her Washington apartment window so that she and her fellow WAVES, who had just worked the night shift, could sleep. Mrs. Bentley and her roommate helped hold the legs of another roommate, who was dangling out of the window to reach the nest. The characters in this story, Josephine and Nellie, turned into Mrs. Bentley's lifelong friends.

During her time of service, the Naval Communications Intelligence Organization (NCIO) received personal commendations from the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet and the



Erna Bentley's September 2018 DAR installation (left to right): great-granddaughter Olivia Head, Col. Samuel Ward Society C.A.R.; daughter Wendy Bentley Bly; Mrs. Bentley; and granddaughter Kristy Bly Head

Commander of the South Pacific for its contributions to the war effort. Mrs. Bentley was promoted quickly to petty officer first class, a rank she held until the war ended. In addition to the World War II Medal and the American Campaign Medal, Mrs. Bentley was authorized to wear the ribbon bar of

the Navy Unit Commendation, awarded for meritorious conduct by the NCIO. In 2018, she added another honor to her name—the Women in American History Medal, presented by the Rhode Island Society DAR and Phebe Greene Ward DAR Chapter, Westerly, R.I.

After the war, she took time off to travel, mostly to Canada to see David. They married in 1946 and had two daughters, Linda and Wendy, a few years later. Last year, she became a DAR member, joining daughter Wendy Bly and granddaughter Kristy Head in Phebe Greene Ward Chapter.

"I am so honored to now be a part of the DAR," she said. "It's our history and heritage, and we have to keep it intact for future generations."

Thanks to Wendy Bly and Kristy Head for interviewing Mrs. Bentley.

Step inside the DAR Museum for a closer look at its fascinating collection.

Wardrobe for Washington

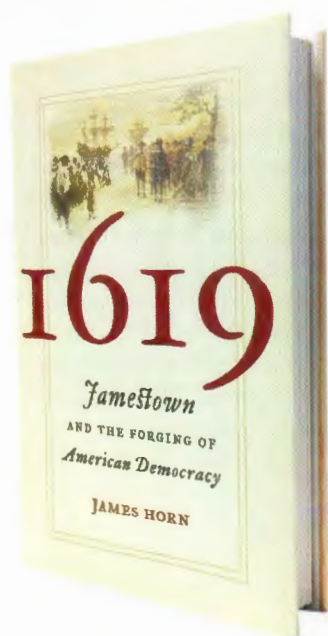


Throughout February 1832, George Washington's 100th birthday was celebrated nationwide with parades—and sometimes participants marked the occasion with commemorative costumes. This silk apron, a ceremonial version of an artisan's apron, is printed with Washington's portrait and birth and death dates. The appliquéd black silk hat design is interlined with a fragment of a New York City newspaper from December 17, 1831, dating the apron to just before the centennial celebration. A hatter (a maker or seller of hats) may have worn it to the centenary parade in Philadelphia, where thousands of artisans marched together. The February 25, 1832, issue of *The Evening Post* of New York, N.Y., reported, "The Hatters—450 in number—were preceded by a standard [flag or banner] ... The members of this company wore white aprons." It seems implausible that so many hundreds of hatters lived within the same city, so it's likely that many traveled to march in the parade—perhaps even the wearer of this apron, given the newspaper clipping's origin.

—Alden O'Brien

A Fateful Peninsula

Jamestown and Yorktown, Va., sit on opposite sides of a peninsula formed by their respective eponymous rivers. Only 20 miles separate the first permanent English colony in America and the site of the decisive American victory of the Revolutionary War. Two recent books delve into these important places in the development of America.



♦ In *1619: Jamestown and the Forging of American Democracy* (Basic Books, 2018), author James Horn explores how two events that occurred four centuries ago have had momentous, continuing ramifications not only for Virginia, but also for all of America.

The first event took place July 30, 1619, when the newly formed Virginia General Assembly, the first representative governing body in the Americas, convened. Its members included the governor, Sir George Yeardley, his four councilors and 22 burgesses elected by the colony's free, white male property owners.

The second event occurred in late August when two privateers, the *White Lion* and the *Treasurer*, landed near Point Comfort with a cargo of slaves from Angola in West Africa. The privateers had seized them in an attack on a Spanish slave ship. Running low on food and water, the privateers sailed for Jamestown and offered to trade the captives for provisions. Well-to-do planters such as Gov. Yeardley bought them and put them to work on their tobacco plantations.

These events took place at a delicate time for the colony. Jamestown had almost failed soon after its founding by the Virginia Company in 1607. Though more prosperous now, the colony had been wracked by mismanagement and remained vulnerable to disease, hunger and violence with its American Indian neighbors.

Starting in 1616, Sir Edwin Sandys and other like-minded members of the Virginia Company moved to reform the colony's management. They aimed to establish a "commonwealth"—a form of government familiar to the English that was designed to maximize the well-being of all members of the society. Sandys' vision included a place for the native peoples—once they had converted to Christianity—as well as the growing number of white indentured servants.

The reforms increased protections for private property, implemented a

new system of land apportionment, and gave colonists a voice in running their affairs so far from company headquarters. The changes occurred during a time of considerable debate in England about the meaning of rights, freedoms and consent of the governed. Horn outlines this complex background and traces how this debate would ultimately lead to the English Civil War, fought from 1642 to 1651.

The reformers' commonwealth did not envision slavery, Horn notes. By 1619, the Spanish and Portuguese had already brought more than 500,000 slaves to their New World colonies. In contrast, the Virginia Company focused on mass migration from England to populate and work its colony, and for years after 1619, the number of imported slaves increased slowly.

Horn notes there has been debate as to whether the captive Africans were actually enslaved or indentured. Some argue that contemporary records often described them as servants, and Virginia did not enact slavery laws until decades later. Horn rebuts this claim, noting that slavery was already so common in the New World that the later laws simply put into words what had been fact from the start.

Though Virginia is still called a commonwealth, Sandys' vision did not survive. Political and economic forces wrecked the plan. King Charles I dissolved the Virginia Company in 1625 and declared Virginia a royal colony. However, the seed of representative government had firmly taken root, continuing to shape Virginia history to this day.

1619 is a must-read for those curious about America's early days. It looks beyond the familiar story of Jamestown and helps us better understand a complex period of history.

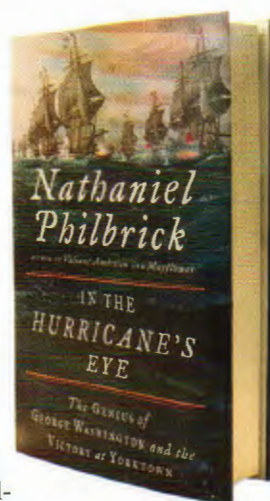
♦ Nathaniel Philbrick's new book, *In the Hurricane's Eye: The Genius of George Washington and the Victory at Yorktown* (Viking, 2018), also brings fresh eyes to a familiar story by exploring the importance of sea power in the crucial victory at Yorktown.

Philbrick argues that the central role of the French Navy at the Battle of Yorktown has been generally underappreciated. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Washington knew the Patriots needed naval superiority to win, but America had no hope of achieving this on its own. Like the millions in loans and supplies it provided, France would have to give America that crucial edge.

The French victory at the Battle of the Chesapeake in September 1781 "has been called the most important naval engagement in the history of the world," Philbrick writes. The victory drove off the British fleet and prevented it from evacuating Cornwallis' forces at Yorktown. Their ships pounded the hapless Redcoats from the bay as the combined American-French army moved forward on land.

France's entry into the war also drew British attention away from the Colonies, turning the Revolutionary War into a world war with many far-flung lands at stake. Crucially for the Patriots, England decided to divert ships and soldiers from America to the Caribbean to protect its sugar-producing colonies. By weakening their presence in America, the British unintentionally gave the Americans a slight edge.

Philbrick chronicles Washington's repeated efforts to coordinate land and sea forces for a decisive blow; the general's



hair-pulling frustrations with his French allies (and theirs with him); and the rivalries and jealousies on all sides that threatened to scuttle the Patriots' chances.

The role of the sea in human endeavors dominates *In the Hurricane's Eye*. The title refers to three hurricanes that devastated the Caribbean over two weeks in October 1780. Previously, the French fleet had focused on the struggle for sugar islands—much to Washington's despair. But the hurricanes persuaded the French they should sail north during the treacherous summer and fall months, thus setting the stage for the victory on the Chesapeake.

In the Hurricane's Eye brings a fresh perspective to the struggle for independence. The narrative surges along like a ship under full sail with a favorable wind. It includes telling anecdotes about the principal characters. For instance, Washington's half-brother Lawrence arranged for the 14-year-old Washington to be commissioned in the English navy. At the last moment, his mother, Mary, wept and pleaded "so irresistibly" that the lad remained at home, and history was made.

Philbrick notes that during the war, the British had offered freedom to slaves who escaped to their lines. Cornwallis had thousands of former slaves at Yorktown, and Washington could have allowed them to retain their freedom. Instead, slave catchers poured into the area and took many back into bondage. As had happened at Jamestown in 1619, freedom and slavery simultaneously made history. —Bill Hudgins

Letters to the Editor

Commanding Visits

The January/February 2019 issue of *American Spirit* took readers on a road trip to the 13 presidential libraries overseen by the National Archives and Records Administration. On the magazine's Facebook page ([Facebook.com/AmericanSpiritMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanSpiritMagazine)), several readers wrote about their personal visits to these libraries.

I went to the Truman library on a field trip when I was a student at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo. One of

his aides let Mr. Truman know there was a student group touring the library and arranged for him to speak to us after we gathered in a small auditorium. We were told that the former president would not speak to adult groups because "the adults already had their chance."

—Linda McDaniel Coble

I recently took my kids and husband to the Reagan and Nixon libraries in Southern California. The kids were especially impressed by the Air Force One plane at Reagan's and the Oval Office replica at Nixon's, where you can walk in and sit on the sofa. At both it was obvious the staff loves what they do.

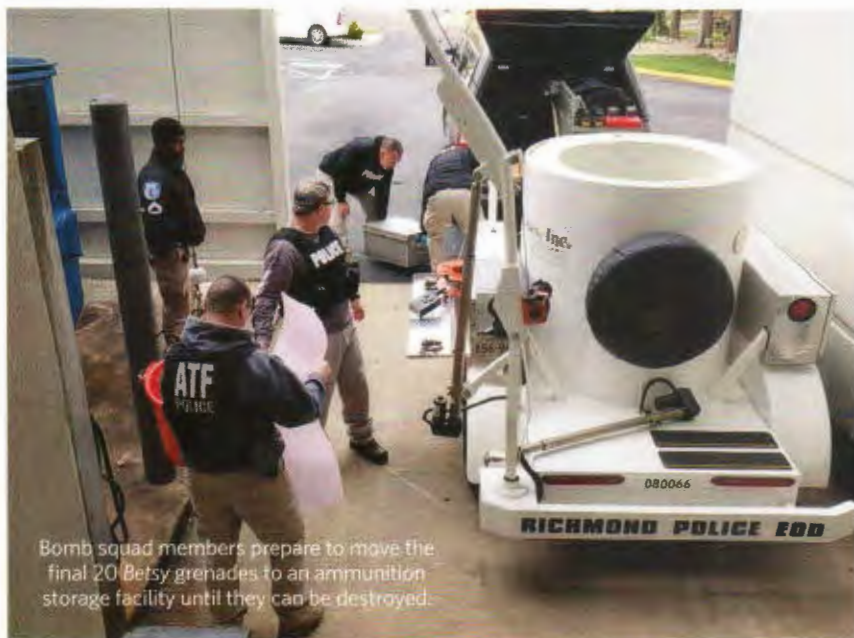
—Elske Lunde Haberl

At the George W. Bush library in Dallas, everyone who visits has their photo taken and is part of a wonderful welcoming photo display. You can also sit at his desk and pretend you are president!

—Susan Cothran

I've enjoyed visiting the presidential libraries for Hoover, Eisenhower, Truman and Bush 41, where I saw part of the Berlin Wall. I was most impressed by Truman's home, maybe because much of his house was similar to my memories of the 1940s and 1950s. I even remember the toaster on the table! The tour gave me a greater picture of the man and how he lived the remainder of his life.

—Nancy Yeakel Bender



Bomb squad members prepare to move the final 20 Betsy grenades to an ammunition storage facility until they can be destroyed.



Andrew Foster, assistant collections manager at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, sorts through musket balls retrieved from the *Betsy*.

A (Potentially) Explosive Find

It's not often that museum conservators meet up with bomb squad personnel—particularly when it comes to Revolutionary War relics—but conservators in Richmond, Va., experienced such a scare recently.

After a grant gave staff at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources the time and resources to sift through old boxes in the state's repository, a conservator happened upon an explosive black powder core from a hand grenade that had been in storage for 30 years. In the coming weeks, the team found a total of 24 hand grenades and two cannonballs. Even more surprising? The hand grenades were from the Siege at Yorktown, the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.

The corroded grenades were first excavated in 1989 along with thousands of other artifacts from the *Betsy*, a

British ship that was sunk in the York River on September 16, 1781. In an act of desperation, General Charles Cornwallis had sunk the *Betsy* and other ships in his fleet to form a barrier in the river to keep French ships from sailing to the Continental Army's aid in Yorktown.

Because of budget cuts, the *Betsy*'s relics weren't analyzed—and the grenades were mislabeled before going to storage shelves in the depository. That was until a Maritime Heritage grant from the National Park Service funded the examination and retreatment of artifacts that were prone to decay, such as wood, rope and other organic materials. Around Thanksgiving 2018, a conservator found the first of the explosive items—and called in the bomb squad.

For three months, museum staff worked with bomb technicians from the Richmond, Henrico County and Virginia State Police, as well as the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, to find and dispose of the still-hazardous materials.

"We hate to see anything historic destroyed," conservator Kate Ridgway told *The Virginian-Pilot* in a February 20, 2019, story, "but it's just too dangerous to keep."



Conservator Chelsea Blake preserves part of an hourglass from the wreck of the *Betsy*.

IN THE Galleries

“Women Artists of the Mountain State”

Through June 30, 2019
Huntington Museum of Art,
Huntington, W.Va.
www.hmoa.org

The exhibit features work from notable West Virginia women who became successful professional artists, such as Blanche Lazzell, a Morgantown native known for her modernist woodblock prints and paintings. It also recognizes the many women who worked in colleges and universities in West Virginia and helped to establish art centers and museums across the state. The museum's exhibit serves as a companion to the traveling exhibit, “Central to Their

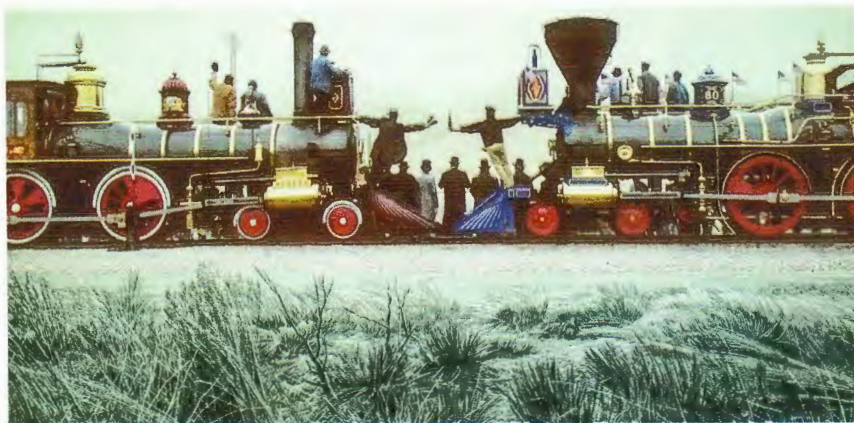
Lives: Southern Women Artists in the Johnson Collection,” on display at the Huntington Museum of Art during the same time.



“Zhi Lin: Chinese Railroad Workers of the Sierra Nevada”

Through November 10, 2019, Nevada Museum of Art, www.nevadaart.org

In 1869, the first Transcontinental Railroad in the United States was completed. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the engineering feat, the Nevada Museum of Art is hosting an exhibit featuring the work of Chinese artist Zhi Lin. The internationally acclaimed artist has spent much of his career creating art that honors the Chinese migrant workers who came to the Sierra Nevada in the 19th century. His watercolor paintings, video installations and mixed-media canvases illustrate the sacrifices of nearly 1,200 forgotten Chinese workers who lost their lives to accidents, avalanches and explosions during the construction of the railroad.



“Day,” by Agnes Pelton, 1935. Oil on canvas.
Collection of the Phoenix Art Museum

“Agnes Pelton: Desert Transcendentalist”

Through 2020, Phoenix, Ariz.; Santa Fe, N.M.; New York, N.Y.; Palm Springs, Calif.
www.phxart.org

Modern artist Agnes Pelton was born in 1881 in Germany to American parents and moved to the United States as a young girl. Ms. Pelton was a student of the arts from a young age, studying landscape and modern art from Arthur Wesley Dow, who also taught Georgia O’Keeffe. She took summer classes from William Langson Lathrop and learned life drawing at the British School in Rome. Ms. Pelton was also a founding member of Caluilla DAR Chapter, Palm Springs, Calif.

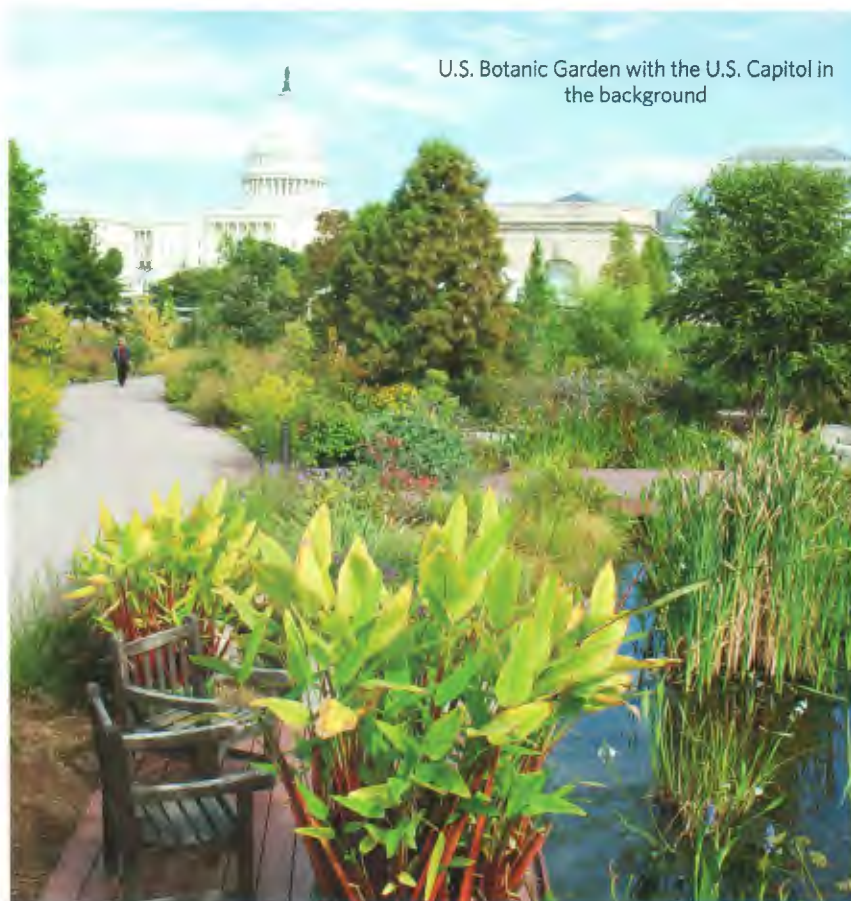
Ms. Pelton painted many conventional desert landscapes of the Southwest, but she is also well-known for her abstract compositions, which focus on fire as a guiding force. An exhibit of more than 40 of Ms. Pelton’s works from various private and museum collections—including the permanent collection owned by the Phoenix Art Museum—are on display in the Steele Gallery at the Phoenix Art Museum until September 8, 2019. From there, the exhibit will travel to Santa Fe’s New Mexico Museum of Art, then New York’s Whitney Museum of American Art, before the exhibit wraps in 2020 at the Palm Springs Art Museum.

History in Bloom

The idea to create a national botanic garden is as old as the Founders themselves. Borne from the minds of George Washington, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson—the last of whom was a celebrated gardener—the vision was to create a sanctuary to collect, grow, house and display both native and foreign plants for the benefit of the American people.

The first iteration of the U.S. Botanic Garden was established on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in 1820, by the Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences. After the institute stopped holding meetings in 1837, the garden fell by the wayside and would not be thought of again until 1842, when the U.S. Exploring Expedition (more commonly known as the Wilkes Expedition) brought a considerable collection of living plants from around the world to Washington, D.C. Those plants were moved to the site of the institute's former garden for safekeeping.

Since 1850, the U.S. Botanic Garden has been open to the public. With more than 28,000 square feet of lush foliage and rare and endangered plant species in the Conservatory alone, the modern U.S. Botanic Garden, which has been at



U.S. Botanic Garden with the U.S. Capitol in the background



Rose Garden



Conservatory Garden Court

its current location since 1933, is a grand monument to the Founders' wishes. The space also features a 3-acre outdoor oasis called the National Garden, a World Deserts exhibit, the peaceful Bartholdi Park and an entire room brimming with more than 5,000 orchid specimens. The garden is supervised by Congress through the Architect of the Capitol, which is responsible for maintaining the grounds of the U.S. Capitol.

The next time you're in the nation's capital, stop by for the ultimate change of scenery. Admission is free and the Botanic Garden is open every day of the year. To learn more, visit www.usbg.gov.

Botanical Bests

The following botanical gardens are regularly listed among the nation's best by the Travel Channel and the *USA Today* 10 Best series. What are your favorites? Let us know at [Facebook.com/AmericanSpiritMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanSpiritMagazine).

Longwood Gardens

Kennett Square, Pa.

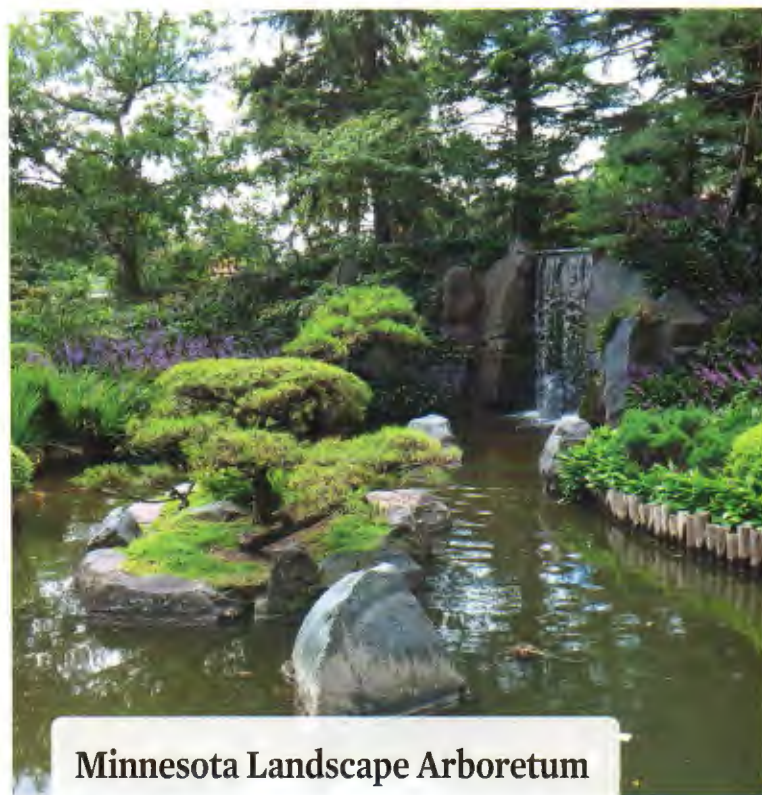
PUT ON YOUR HIKING SHOES to explore Longwood Gardens' more than 1,000 acres of gardens, woodlands and meadows. Located in Pennsylvania's Brandywine Valley, the garden features Peirce's Park with trees cultivated around Philadelphia at the turn of the 19th century, and the Idea Garden, which offers tips for home gardeners. To learn more and to subscribe to its blog containing horticulture and garden design information, visit longwoodgardens.org.



Desert Botanical Garden

Phoenix

THE DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN in Phoenix opened in 1939 after local citizens banded together to conserve the diversity of the area's desert environment. The garden is beautiful year-round, but it's especially eye-popping in the spring when its wildflowers bloom. Focused solely on desert plants, the garden's 145 acres showcase more than 50,000 plant specimens, including a unique collection of cacti. For more information, visit www.dbg.org.



Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Chaska, Minn.

VAST IS ONE WORD for the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. With more than 1,200 acres of manicured gardens and natural areas such as woodlands, prairies and marshes, green-thumbbed visitors will be mesmerized for hours. Don't miss the Terrace Garden, Chinese Garden and Japanese Garden, and learn more about plants developed for northern climates. For more information, visit www.arboretum.umn.edu.



What's in a Name

Discover the meaning behind some of the DAR chapters' unique names.

Organized May 15, 1913, in **Napton, Mo., Patsy Gregg Chapter** is named after a pioneer woman from the region. In 1811, while living with her family in the Illinois wilderness, 16-year-old Patsy Cox witnessed her brother's death in an attack by American Indians, who then held her captive. Her rescue party included her father and a man named William Gregg, whom she married. The families relocated to Missouri soon thereafter.

Tragedy struck again before Christmas 1814, when her husband was murdered outside of their cabin, leaving her a widow with a small son and unborn daughter. Patsy persevered despite the loss of her property and family members during the Civil War.

Her final months were spent in the home of her son in Austin, Texas. Her oral history was recorded by her descendants in letters sent to the chapter. Patsy Gregg passed away surrounded by her family in 1875.

Whispering Pines and Prairie Chapter, Fremont, Mich., was organized July 5, 2005, and is named for the whispering sound the wind makes as it blows through pine boughs. In 1840, the northern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula consisted of white pine forests, which later fueled the state's burgeoning logging industry. One of the first sawmills in Michigan was located in what is now Newaygo County. The lumber from these trees was instrumental in rebuilding Chicago after the Great Fire of 1871. By 1890, however, the forests were gone.

During the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps reforested the land with blocks of white, red, Scotch and Austrian pines. Newaygo County also has a large natural prairie that is home to several species of flora and fauna not found in any other area as far east of the Mississippi River.

Mary Vining Chapter, Seaford, Del., organized April 6, 1940, is the only Delaware chapter bearing a woman's name. The founding members of the chapter selected Mary Vining since seven of them were her descendants.

Mary Vining, born August 20, 1756, was known as the "Belle of Delaware." Her cousin, Caesar Rodney—an officer of the Delaware militia, a Delaware delegate to Continental Congress and a signer of the Declaration of Independence—encouraged her to support the Revolutionary cause. She acted as his confidant and frequent hostess in Philadelphia.

Ms. Vining died in 1821 and is said to have been buried in an unmarked grave in Old Swedes Churchyard in Wilmington, Del. Old Swedes Church, constructed 1698–1699, is one of the oldest surviving structures in Delaware as well as a rare remnant of the Delaware Valley's New Sweden Colony.

Today, a portrait of Ms. Vining hangs in the Maull House in Lewes, Del., a historic home owned by the Lewes-based Colonel David Hall DAR Chapter.

Lost in
Translation:

Wonderfully Weird Physiology Terms

Nowadays, if someone called you a "Duke of Limbs," chances are you wouldn't know how to respond. But back in the early days of New England, that expression was more an insult than a compliment: It referred to a boy who was a bit awkward.

Certain colloquialisms and terms used by commoners in the 1600s are easier to deduce than others. For instance, your "noodle" or "nod" was your head, your "stumps" meant your legs, and if you were a "totty-head" then you were a bit giddy or harebrained.

Here's a list of other common expressions—courtesy of *Grose's Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* by Francis Grose (1785) and *Villainies Discovered: OR The Devil's Cabinet Broken Open* by Richard Head (1673)—that are more challenging to interpret:

— A "rum duke" was a handsome boy, and an "article" was a pretty girl.

— A "rabbit catcher" was a midwife.

— Your head was a "nab" while one's hat was known as a "nab-cheat."

— A punch to the face was called a "pult in the muns."

— To "make leg" meant you bowed to someone.

— Feet were "stampers" and your arm was a "smiter."

— Riding "shanks naggy" or on a "bayard of 10 toes" meant you were traveling without a horse.

— Unflattering names like "Mr. Double-Tripe" and "Puff Guts" meant you were overweight.

— A "blind cupid" was your backside.



An 1866 Juneteenth celebration in Washington, D.C.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATIONS Around the Country

Juneteenth may not be a holiday marked on most calendars, but it is an important date in American history because it commemorates the ending of slavery in the United States.

Though President Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, it wasn't until the end of the Civil War more than two years later that news of freedom reached the more than 250,000 enslaved African-Americans in Texas.

On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger read General Order No. 3 to the people of Texas:

"The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer."

For more than 150 years, African-Americans have gathered to remember the end of slavery on or near June 19—frequently referred to as America's second Independence Day or the black Fourth of July. It's also a time to celebrate

black culture, music, food, history and the freedom fighters who paved the way to abolish slavery and establish civil rights for all Americans. Visit one of these Juneteenth celebrations near you:

Missouri City Juneteenth Celebration

Missouri City, Texas, June 20-23, 2019

The nation's largest Juneteenth festival, the Missouri City celebration includes a golf tournament, movie night in the park, a community art project, and a music festival featuring hip-hop, blues, jazz, country and zydeco performers.

Juneteenth Atlanta Parade & Music Festival

Atlanta, Ga., June 14-16, 2019

This three-day event features a black history parade, fireworks, an afro fashion show, musical guests and retail booths operated by black-owned businesses.

S.F. Juneteenth

San Francisco, Calif., June 15, 2019

San Francisco's annual event in the Fillmore District draws thousands to the Bay Area, raising historical awareness and providing African-American vendors an opportunity to market their business and showcase their craft. The event features a parade, musical guests and prominent speakers.

Juneteenth Parade and Festival

Philadelphia, Pa., June 22, 2019

The annual celebration begins with an "Honor Our Ancestors" breakfast, followed by a parade and a music festival at Malcolm X Park. Local and national celebrities are expected to attend, and the parade will be telecast.

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Spotlighting DAR volunteers who give back to their communities in meaningful ways



This photo: Weighted vests
Right: A weighted blanket



flannel lining, and a half-cup of tiny plastic beads fill each pocket. Sometimes the beads, which can be expensive, are donated to the organization by a supplier in Tennessee.

Threads of Comfort

For the past two years, Burnetta Schrecker, a member of Fort Sullivan DAR Chapter, Charleston, S.C., has contributed her sewing skills as a volunteer with Clap Your Hands, a nonprofit that provides therapeutic products for children with cognitive and physical disabilities.

Volunteers like Mrs. Schrecker make weighted blankets, lap pads and neck pads; sensory and tactile pellet bags; fingerless gloves and bibs for children with special needs. Weighted items often provide a calming effect by mimicking the feeling of being hugged or swaddled, which can relieve stress, and sensory pads offer a beneficial alternative to destructive behavior for children diagnosed with bodily focused impulse control disorders.

Mrs. Schrecker first encountered Clap Your Hands in 2016, when she was program chair for the Greater Charleston Rotary Club Auxiliary. After a friend told her about the organization, Mrs. Schrecker invited Founder and Executive Director Sue Desautels to present a program at the auxiliary's monthly meeting. Ms. Desautels' presentation of Clap Your Hands' contributions to the community was so meaningful, Mrs. Schrecker was immediately hooked.

"I was thrilled to be able to use my sewing experience to help special needs families," she said. The project was already close to her heart because her grandson Will has Angelman Syndrome, a rare neurogenetic disorder.

So far, Mrs. Schrecker has made approximately 15 weighted blankets (they're her favorite) and five weighted vests. The weighted blankets are usually made with a cotton front and soft

detailed directions and supplies for volunteers, and offers free quarterly sewing workshops to demonstrate how to create the items. Sometimes individual volunteers join forces and host sewing bees, which can be immensely productive—not to mention personally rewarding. In 2018, volunteers contributed a total of 3,101 handmade items, which the organization gave to partners such as therapists, pediatricians and counselors for distribution to children.

Knowing that her efforts have simplified or enhanced children's day-to-day lives makes the effort worthwhile for Mrs. Schrecker. 🧵



Burnetta Schrecker with her daughter,
Elizabeth Schrecker

Supporting worthy projects nationwide focused on the mission of the DAR

Remembering The American Doughboy

Thanks to an NSDAR Special Projects Grant, a Weber County Heritage Foundation project to restore the iconic World War I “doughboy” statue in Ogden was finished in time to celebrate the centennial of the end of World War I.

During World War I, members of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps were called doughboys, perhaps because the buttons on their uniforms resembled flour dumplings or dough cakes. To honor the American doughboys after the armistice ending World War I was signed on November 11, 1918, many cities across the nation erected statues and monuments. Utah’s first doughboy statue was erected in Ogden in 1920. The statue by Gilbert Risvold originally stood on the balcony of the American Legion Post, but was moved to the Ogden Cemetery shortly after World War II.

In the century since it was raised, Ogden’s doughboy statue had fallen into significant disrepair. The soldier’s original helmet had been stolen, and the barrel of his replica 1903 Springfield rifle had been bent backward by potential thieves trying to pry it out of the soldier’s hands. Another helmet the soldier originally held in his hand was spray-painted and placed on his head. Well-meaning helpers had attempted to improve the statue’s appearance with spray paint, causing further damage. The statue’s cement base was crumbling, and vandals had even shot at the statue. “It really saw the ravages of time,” said Mary Galbraith of the Weber County Heritage Foundation.

The foundation decided to pursue a complete restoration, with the goal for the statue to look as it appeared when first erected at the American Legion. The statue was removed from the cemetery and temporarily relocated to the studio of Adonis Bronze, where the bronze was stripped, cleaned and repaired. “The company also recreated and replaced the lost helmet and rifle bolt, repaired joints and applied a new bronze patina,” said an article in the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*. “The crumbling concrete



dais underneath the statue was replaced with a taller piece of granite. The bronze medallions were cleaned and restored, and a new fence has been put around the base of the soldier.”

After the lengthy restoration process, the doughboy returned to the cemetery in August 2018. Its official unveiling occurred at a November 10, 2018, event commemorating Veterans Day and the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day.

The historic preservation project was funded through a DAR Special Projects Grant sponsored by Golden Spike DAR Chapter, Ogden, Utah, in collaboration with funds raised by the Weber County Heritage Foundation.

The NSDAR Special Projects Grants program invites public charity 501(c)(3) organizations to apply for matching fund grants to support worthwhile local projects related to historic preservation, education and patriotism. For more information on applying for a Special Projects Grant, visit www.dar.org/grants.

Memphis

Rise of a River Town

— By Emily McMackin —

From fledgling port to commercial and cultural center, Memphis, Tenn., celebrates two centuries of history, resilience and growth along the Mississippi River.

Known worldwide as the birthplace of rock 'n' roll, Memphis draws millions of visitors each year to the eastern bank of the Mississippi River to explore its musical heritage, sample its barbecue and reflect on its role in the civil rights movement.

But long before Beale Street musician W.C. Handy wrote the first commercially published blues song, Elvis Presley recorded his first hit at Sun Studio or Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his final speech at a Memphis pulpit, the city was a crossroads for culture, commerce and exploration of the expanding American frontier.

An 'Auspicious' Location

Founded on May 22, 1819, by Tennesseans John Overton, James Winchester and future U.S. President Andrew Jackson, Memphis was named after Egypt's ancient capital along the Nile River. The west Tennessee hamlet was "destined to

become a large and populous city," Overton wrote in an 1820 newspaper advertisement promoting the new town.

Translated to mean "place of good abode," Memphis possessed logistical advantages that captured the early interest of its founders. Its perch on a bluff rising high above the Mississippi provided protection from flooding, along with direct access to the nation's largest waterway system and control of navigation on its lower half. As Overton boasted in his ad, "there is no situation on the banks of the Upper Mississippi which is more auspicious to health or better suited to the rapid acquisition of wealth."

Despite a slow start due to economic difficulties of the new republic and competition from other emerging river towns, Memphis has flourished over the past 200 years, growing from a fledgling port into a bustling city. Long an international leader in agricultural industries such as cotton and hardwood, the city is also known for its groundbreaking innovations in shipping, retail, music and hospitality.

GETTY IMAGES

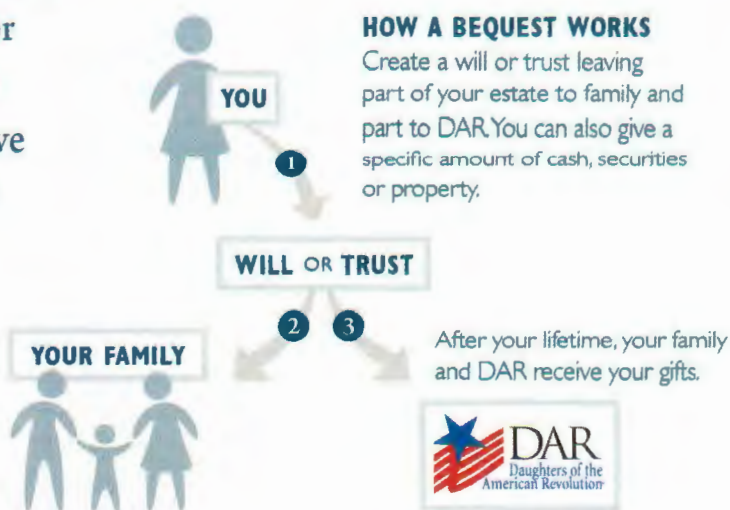


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Be part of our American legacy.

As Memphis celebrates its bicentennial this May, the community is banking much of its future growth on mindful preservation of its past. Revitalization of historic districts and adaptive reuse of buildings, greenways and waterfronts are injecting new vitality into the city for the next generation of Memphians.

Clash of Cultures

American Indians were the first to inhabit the land encompassing present-day Memphis. Mississippian tribal cultures built earthen mounds along the river, but they had migrated further south by the time Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto arrived in the area in 1541 searching for gold. Despite local lore, de Soto and his expedition never ventured to the fourth Chickasaw bluff overlooking the Mississippi, where Memphis stands today, though they did camp within 20 miles of the bluff. They brought the first hogs to the continent—and perhaps even the first barbecue, as they routinely roasted them for meat.

After claiming the land for Spain and clashing with local American Indians, the men stayed long enough to build flatboats and cross the Mississippi at night to escape hostile Indians patrolling the river. The Spaniards journeyed on to present-day Arkansas, where de Soto eventually died of a fever. His men buried him in the waters they called Rio del Espiritu Santo, or “River of the Holy Spirit.”

In 1673, French explorers Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette stopped at the fourth Chickasaw bluff while searching for a route to the Pacific Ocean. There they encountered American Indians who had firearms and other items indicating contact with British traders. In 1682, the explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle stopped near the bluff to hunt and built a fort before continuing on to the Gulf of Mexico, where he claimed the Mississippi Valley for France. Another fort, Fort Assumption, was constructed in 1739, after the French attempted to wrest the land around the bluff from the Chickasaw Indians, who used the grounds for hunting. Bombarded by disease and desertions, the fort was abandoned after a few months.

France lost its New World claims in 1763 after the Treaty of Paris ending the French and Indian War gave the British all of the land east of the Mississippi. But the king of France had ceded its Louisiana holdings to Spain in a secret treaty the year before, making the Spaniards hesitant to give

up control of the lower Mississippi Valley. Even after the Americans won independence from Great Britain, the Spanish maintained their claims along the western and southern boundaries of the newly formed United States. They were soon challenged by land speculators.

Along the fourth Chickasaw bluff, speculators John Rice and John Ramsey purchased adjoining 5,000-acre tracts from North Carolina, which claimed many of the former British land titles extending to the Mississippi. But the Spanish were not so easily vanquished. In 1795, they built Fort San Fernando at the bluff and occupied it for nearly two years, despite agreeing to cede all claims east of the Mississippi to the United States.

After Spanish troops finally withdrew in 1797, the bluff became home to a U.S. military outpost later known as

Fort Pickering, where several illustrious Americans served, including future U.S. President Zachary Taylor and Meriwether Lewis, who explored the West with William Clark. Traders and squatters also occupied the area.

Rice was killed by American Indians before he could realize his vision for a settlement on the bluff, but Tennessee lawyer John



Levee at Memphis circa 1887

Overton purchased Rice's tract from his heirs with plans to develop it. Overton sold half of his plot to friend and business associate Andrew Jackson, who then sold a portion of acreage to military commander James Winchester. Their legal claim to the land, however, was questionable until the Chickasaw Cession in 1818, negotiated by Jackson and former Kentucky governor Isaac Shelby. Bargaining on behalf of their respective states, Jackson and Shelby cajoled the tribe into selling millions of acres of ancestral land between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers for \$300,000. The deal, called the Jackson Purchase, officially opened West Tennessee for settlement.

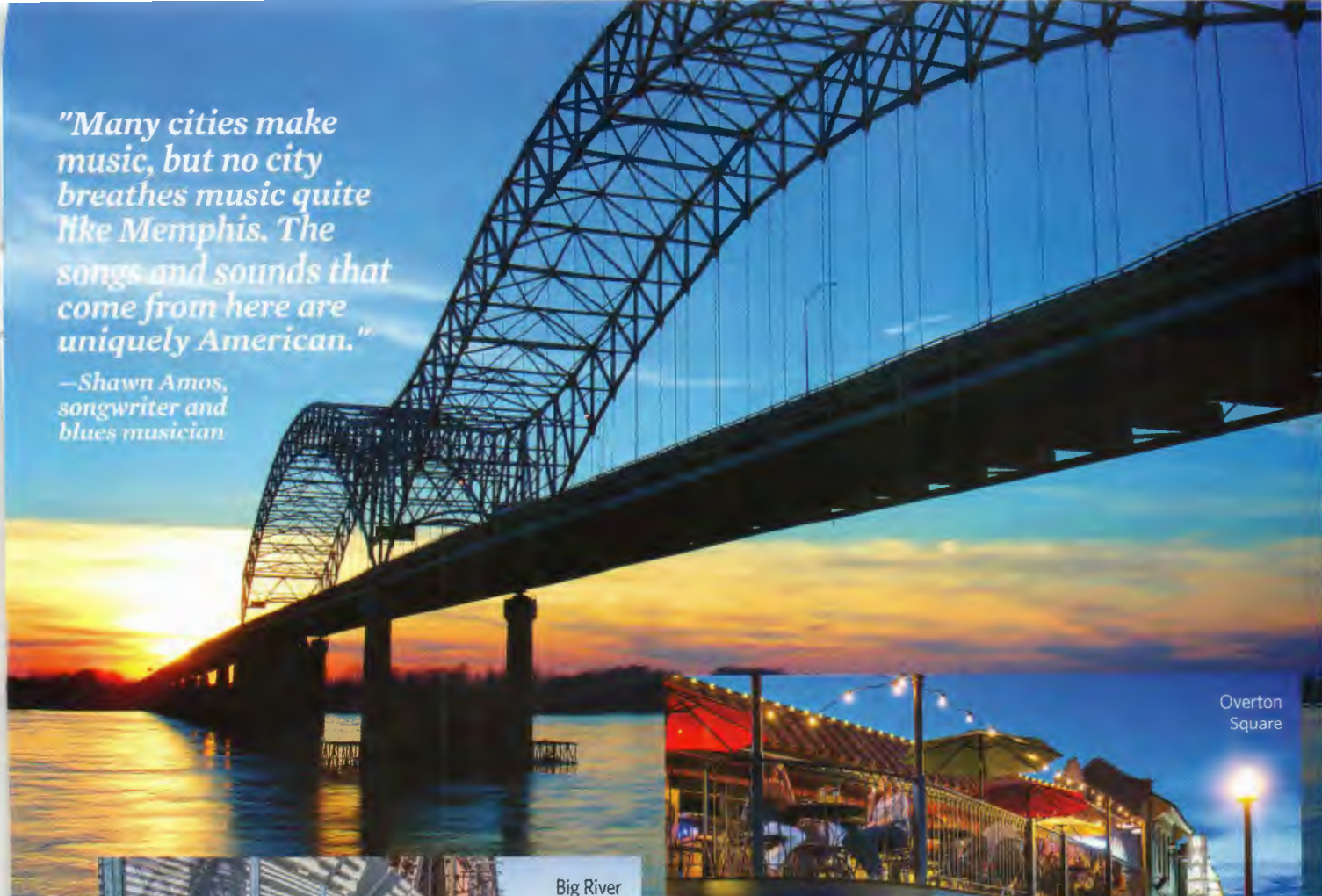
Bluff City Is Born

Shortly after the treaty was signed, Overton, Jackson and Winchester began laying out their plans for a town on the bluff they called Memphis. The site consisted of 362 lots adjacent to the riverbank, including several public squares where residents could gather and a promenade along the river for recreation and leisure. Streets were named after former U.S. presidents.

With no plans to reside in Memphis themselves, the men hired Winchester's son, Marcus, to sell lots for them locally.

"Many cities make music, but no city breathes music quite like Memphis. The songs and sounds that come from here are uniquely American."

—Shawn Amos,
songwriter and
blues musician



Big River
Crossing



Overton
Square



National
Civil Rights
Museum

The first deeds were given to squatters already living on the bluff in exchange for pledges to build commercial structures. Despite an ambitious advertising campaign by Overton, development was much slower than the proprietors had hoped. Not only was the nation undergoing its first economic depression, but outbreaks of yellow fever and cholera and rival settlements to the south and north also stunted growth.

Memphis lost its county seat designation early on to neighboring Raleigh, which was more centrally located, and its river traffic was impeded by Randolph, a burgeoning town upriver with more navigable waters. By 1823, Jackson had sold the rest of his interest in the town, which some suspected was a move to conceal his dubious dealings with the Chickasaws as he prepared to run for president the next year.

GETTY IMAGES; BIG RIVER STRATEGIC INITIATIVE, LLC; MEMPHIS TOURISM

MEMPHIS MUST-SEES

For music lovers:

Step inside **Graceland**, the Colonial Revival-style mansion and 13.8-acre estate Elvis Presley called home, for an intimate look into the life, legacy and style of the King of Rock 'n' Roll. Visit Graceland's new entertainment complex, **Elvis Presley's Memphis**, to discover more about his roots, influences and artistry and browse his legendary jumpsuits, automobile collection and personal mementos.

Tour **Sun Studio** on Union Avenue, where producer Sam Phillips discovered Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash and other famous rockers, and sing into the microphone Elvis used to record his first single, "That's Alright Mama."



Explore the explosion of soul music in Memphis at the **Stax Museum of American Soul Music**, which celebrates one of the most racially integrated studios of its day and artists who put it on the map, such as Otis Redding, Al Green and Isaac Hayes.

Learn about the evolution of rock and soul music, from its roots in the fields of sharecroppers to its global impact today, at the **Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum**, curated by the Smithsonian Institution. Then walk over to the cobblestone streets of the **Historic Beale Street**



ROBERT DYE/GRACELAND

Entertainment District, the official home of the blues, to experience the music and energy that inspired W.C. Handy, B.B. King, Elvis and more.

For history buffs:

Visit **The Pink Palace**, the 1920s pink marble mansion built by Piggly Wiggly founder Clarence Saunders, who invented the first self-service supermarket. Now a museum, the mansion showcases Memphis history, including an exhibit tracing its 200 years as a city, along with a planetarium, Depression-era murals depicting de Soto's visit to the area, a replica of the first Piggly Wiggly, and an eclectic natural history collection.



Soak up the lore of the mighty Mississippi at **Mud Island River Park**, which features a scale model of the Mississippi River, from its junction at the Ohio River to the Gulf of Mexico. Learn how settlers navigated the river, step inside a riverboat and take a paddleboat ride via interactive exhibits tracing the river's centuries-old history.

Explore **Chucalissa**, a village that interprets the culture and lives of the American Indians who lived at the site during the 15th century. The village includes an archaeological museum with artifacts from the period as well as an arboretum and nature trail.

Experience the triumphs and tragedies of the civil rights struggle at the **National Civil Rights Museum**, located in the restored Lorraine Motel, where Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. Visit the balcony where Dr. King last stood and hear the stories behind pivotal events of the movement and freedom fighters who risked their lives for it.

For architecture aficionados:

Stroll through **The Peabody Memphis**, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary as one of the South's most charming, luxurious hotels. Visit the grand lobby to see the Peabody's famous mallard ducks trot to the fountain and splash around at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. every day. Join a daily tour exploring the history and features of



The ducks at The Peabody Memphis

the hotel, built in 1869, and view its rooftop, memorabilia museum, and newly renovated rooms and suites.

Admire antebellum mansions along Adams Avenue in **Victorian Village**, a neighborhood known as Millionaire's Row in the 1850s for its ornate homes financed by cotton fortunes. Two of the mansions, the



Mallory-Neely House

Mallory-Neely House and the Woodruff-Fontaine House, are open for tours.

Marvel at the towering glass ceilings and Art Deco artistry of the **Crosstown Concourse**, a shuttered Sears distribution center turned urban village that houses condos, restaurants, shops, arts centers and events. Built in 1927, the revamped 1.5-million-square-foot center won the 2018 National Trust for Historic Preservation award for its adaptive reuse.

Enjoy spectacular views of the Memphis bluff and skyline at **Big River Crossing**, a mile-long trail at the historic Harahan rail bridge that takes cyclists and pedestrians across the Mississippi River. The trail recently received the prestigious American Architecture Award.

To learn more, visit www.memphistravel.com.

The city was incorporated in 1826 with slightly more than 300 citizens and a transient population of laborers ferrying goods down the Mississippi and adventurers on their way to the West. Meanwhile, social activist Frances Wright arrived in the area to establish her utopian community of Nashoba, an experimental colony that sought to emancipate slaves by providing them with the education, skills and means to acquire their freedom. While the settlement near present-day Germantown attracted interest, Wright's extended absence due to illness, along with other obstacles, ultimately caused its failure in 1829.

Early commerce in Memphis revolved around the river. Goods were transported mainly by flatboats, which could only be steered downriver in the swift current and were dismantled into firewood upon reaching their destination. While flatboatmen kept local taverns and stores afloat, their rowdy antics, drunken brawls and penchant for gambling gave Memphis a reputation for lawlessness that scared newcomers away.

Growth in steamboat traffic in the latter 1830s brought more lucrative trade to Memphis and gave the town the economic clout to tame the belligerent flatboatmen. Citizens started churches and schools, built a wharf, and organized a fire department, board of health and volunteer militia. These improvements gave rise to more

amenities, from banks to the city's first grand hotel, the Gayoso House.

Cotton became a cash crop for Memphis once farmland in northern Mississippi opened to settlers, doubling its hinterland and spurring the creation of roads beyond its urban center. In the 1840s, the city distinguished itself as a post and stagecoach terminus and early investor in rail. By 1850, Memphis was home to several rail routes and the world's largest inland cotton market. Its population and fortunes swelled, but its growing reliance on slave labor made it a target for capture during the Civil War.

Memphis resumed its trade after a lengthy Union occupation, but was left destitute by multiple yellow fever epidemics that struck throughout the 1870s. Thousands died and tens of thousands fled, leaving the city bankrupt and stripped of more than half its population. Sanitary reforms, the recovery of cotton and a new hardwood industry helped Memphis rebound by the turn of the century. Investment by African-American millionaire Robert Church Sr. helped turn Beale Street into a regional entertainment center that drew musicians from across the Mississippi Delta and nurtured their new genre of music called the blues.

Ever since, Memphis has been a cradle of originality, boasting examples from Elvis to FedEx. Its studios brought rock 'n' roll, blues and soul music to the American stage. Its entrepreneurs revolutionized shipping, retail and lodging, while investing profits back into philanthropic projects at home. Its location along the Mississippi River and near major railroads and highways continues to propel this once-struggling riverport as a top national and international distribution center. And with the ongoing renewal of its historic downtown and neighborhoods, natural attractions and storied structures, Memphis is poised for resurgence once more. 🌿



Gayoso House



The House in the Horseshoe **ALSTON HOUSE**

Built in a horseshoe bend of North Carolina's Deep River, the Alston House preserves the history of a western frontier of the Revolutionary War.

By Jamie Roberts | Photography By Jimmy Haire

The two-story, Colonial-style home was originally built around 1772 by Philip Alston, a Whig colonel, area political leader and plantation owner. Featuring a gable roof with large double chimneys, the home was perched on a hilltop near the river. As befitting its owner's prominence, Alston House, near the county seat of Carthage, N.C., in Moore County, was one of the first so-called "big" houses in the state's interior.

Experiencing War in Their Backyard

Though none of the Revolution's major battles happened in the area, the North Carolina backcountry was the setting

of a bloody civil war between the Whigs (or Patriots) and Tories (or Loyalists). "As the war wound down, the conflict increased," wrote William H. Thompson Jr. and Guy Smith in the *Early History of the House in the Horseshoe*. "The departure of [General Charles] Cornwallis and [Nathanael] Greene's armies left these two groups to themselves in an unsupervised free-for-all that reached shocking proportions."

Thrust into the conflict, Alston and his band of revolutionaries took refuge in his home. On the morning of July 29, 1781, a larger unit of Loyalists led by David Fanning waged a surprise attack on Alston House. After about three hours of fighting and casualties on both sides, Alston surrendered.

Alston escaped imprisonment and rose through the ranks to become a colonel in the state militia, a justice of the peace and a state senator. However, his career and reputation were ruined after he was twice indicted for murder. He was removed as justice of the peace and suspended from the state legislature. In 1790, Philip Alston sold the house and plantation to Thomas Perkins and left the state.

Expanding the Home

In 1798 Benjamin Williams, a former colonel in the Continental Army and a future governor of North Carolina, bought the 2,500-acre cotton plantation. He named the house the "Retreat."

Williams enlarged the house by adding two wings featuring a kitchen and a master bedroom. (An early 20th-century owner tore down these wings.) He also added elaborate detail to the interior woodwork, including the mantel in the north parlor. By 1803 his home and land were valued at \$30,000.

Williams died on the plantation in 1814, and his grave was later moved to the grounds. His family lived in the house until 1853. It changed ownership several times until 1954, when it was bought and restored by the Moore County Historical Association. The state took over ownership in 1955, though the association continued to operate the site.

Finding a Need

After being named a North Carolina Historical Site in 1972, the state assumed full maintenance and operations, employing a site manager and two-person staff. Unfortunately, after the 2008 recession, funding for the home's upkeep evaporated. The state even considered selling the Alston House before concerned citizens petitioned to preserve it. By 2016, capital improvements were sorely needed to contend with aesthetic problems such as cracked windows and crumbling glazing and other more serious structural issues such as wood rot.

Members of Private John Grady DAR Chapter, Sanford, N.C., have long



Opposite page: Rear exterior of the Alston House **This page, clockwise from above:** The front porch (facing the river) with the well house in the forefront • An entrance with bullet holes visible around the doorway • The vegetable storage shed

been involved in supporting the Alston House as individuals, but the idea of doing something more collectively was sparked during a May 2016 picnic the chapter hosted at the home.

During the event, Ray Yamrus, husband of Chapter Treasurer Ann Yamrus, spent time wandering the home's grounds, taking note of work that needed to be done. Rotten wood and peeling paint were visible everywhere. Portions of the front and back porches had caved in and been partially cordoned off to prevent injury. The pathway to the main porch was deteriorating, too. The window sills were so rotten that the windows couldn't be opened for fear they wouldn't close again. Though the double chimneys were standing, they were precarious. The exterior paint was peeling off to an alarmingly extent, exposing the original wood structure.

Ray and Ann shared their concerns with Chapter Regent Sally Porter. She agreed the chapter should pursue solutions for some of the house's maintenance challenges, and the chapter



soon got the ball rolling to fulfill the requirements for a NSDAR Special Projects Grant.

By September 2016, the chapter had raised \$10,000 and was able to apply for a matching grant from the National Society. In April 2017, NSDAR awarded the project a \$10,000 Special Projects Grant.

With funds in hand, work began in June 2017. The pillars were cleaned and repaired by a wood restoration specialist. The windows and window sills were cleaned, repaired and replaced where necessary. "It is so sad to lose the original glass, but the panes were leaking water," Ann said.

A painter scraped the entire two-story house and repainted it with special exterior paint for historic buildings. "This job took the bulk of the money," Ann said, "but it was essential, and the results were absolutely beautiful."



< **Opposite page, clockwise from top left:** Downstairs bedroom door knob • The main breakfront in the living room • The living room with a portrait of Gov. Benjamin Williams over the mantel • The 247-year-old stairs are quite worn. • The fireplace in the boys' bedroom • 18th-century period objects • An 18th-century pewter pitcher

All necessary repairs were completed in January 2018. "More needs to be done, but the Alston House is safe now since the structural problems were addressed," Ann reported.

Keeping the History Alive

Alston House now offers guided house tours Tuesdays through Saturdays and hosts special events, such as an annual battle reenactment (see sidebar below).

Bullet holes caused by the battle can still be seen on the exterior and interior walls of the house. "Almost every visitor wants to poke their fingers into these 238-year-old holes," Ann says.

From the front of the house, visitors can see the horseshoe turn of the Deep River. Inside, the house is decorated with furniture from the late Colonial and early Federal periods, as well as rope beds and linens appropriate to the late 1700s. The first floor consists of a living room and a master bedroom featuring a four-poster bed, wicker cradle, wooden crib and a circa-1790 trunk made from a tree.

Upstairs are boys' and girls' bedrooms, which are decorated with period-appropriate toys, clothing and furniture.

Summer Events at the House in the Horseshoe

June 8: Life in the 18th Century. At this afternoon lecture, visitors will learn about clothing, social customs and the struggles of everyday life in the 18th-century North Carolina backcountry.

July 13: An Afternoon with General Cornwallis. Cornwallis, portrayed by Trent Carter, will reflect on the Southern Campaign during the Revolutionary War. \$10. All proceeds go toward site preservation.

August 3-4, 2019: 40th Annual House in the Horseshoe Battle Reenactment: Visitors can enjoy a variety of Revolutionary War activities and demonstrations, including a reenactment of the fight between Patriot and Loyalist militias at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Among the activities will be musket and cannon firing drills, tomahawk throwing, Revolutionary War militia camps and a wreath-laying ceremony led by the Sons of the American Revolution. On the domestic scene, presentations will include skillet throwing, weaving, spinning, 18th-century beer brewing, a fashion show of period clothing and an interactive look at children's games. A group called Midnight Midwives will give short lectures on Colonial medicinal gardens and apothecary recipes in the home's garden.

The event will be held Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is free, and parking is \$5.

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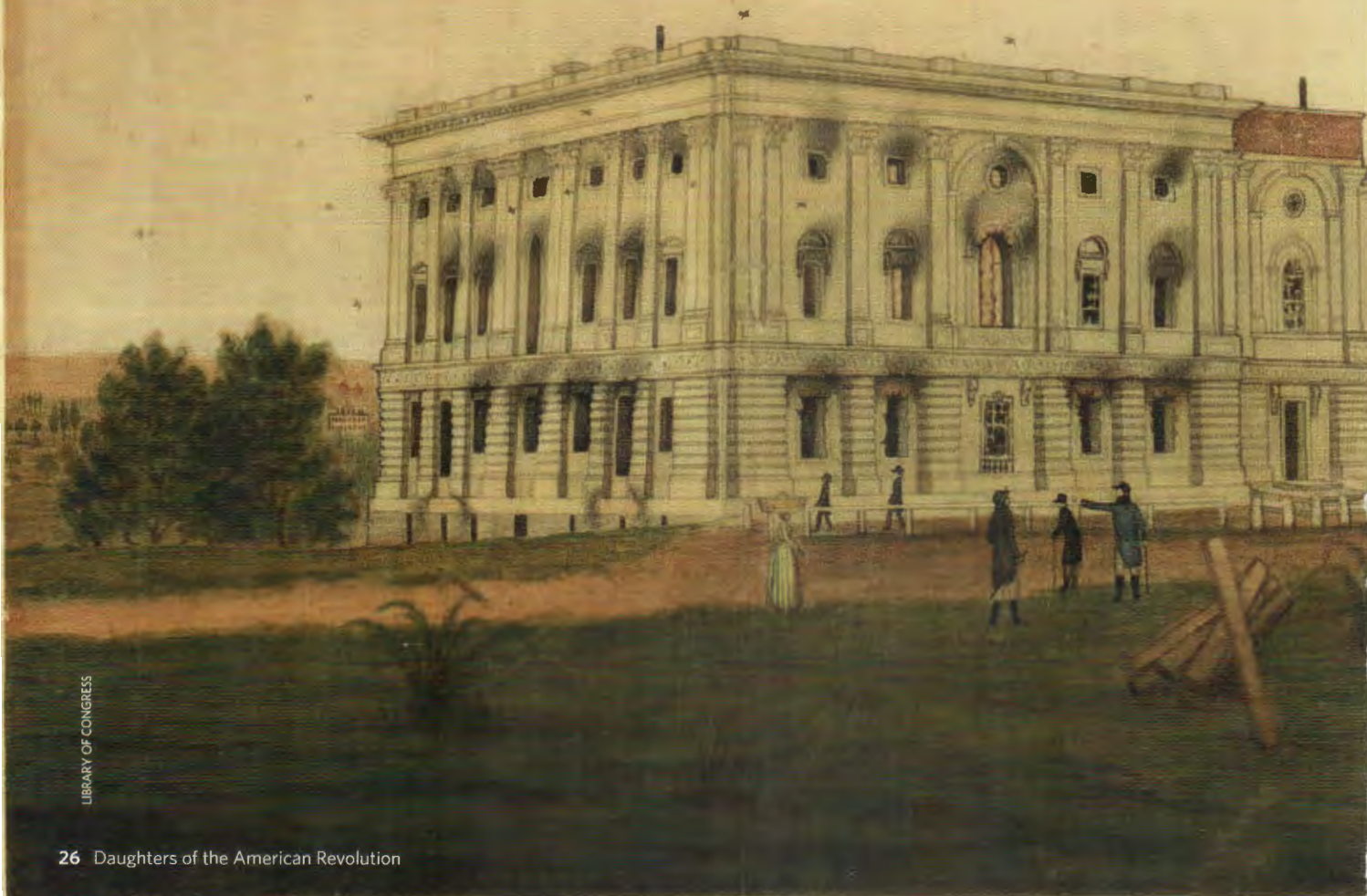


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THE OLD BRICK CAPITOL

**AFTER THE BRITISH BURNED WASHINGTON IN 1814, CONGRESS
CONSIDERED RELOCATING THE CAPITAL CITY.**

— By Bill Hudgins —



The U.S. Capitol is one of the world's most recognizable buildings. Its stately architecture, polished marble corridors and magnificent works of art mesmerize nearly 3 million visitors to

Washington, D.C., each year. However, for a short time in 1814, Congress considered relocating the capital city and letting the village of Washington sink back into its swampy ground.

On the night of August 24, 1814, during the War of 1812, British troops marched unopposed into Washington and set fire to the "President's House," the Capitol and other public buildings. Besides prompting debate over relocating the capital to a more established location such as Philadelphia, the debacle rendered Congress and the Supreme Court homeless.

After finding temporary lodgings in the Patent Office, Congress spent 1815–1819 in a structure later used as a school, a boardinghouse and, finally, as a prison for Confederates.

The debate over relocation threatened to upset the delicate compromise that created the capital district during George Washington's administration. It also galvanized early Washingtonians and ultimately led to the construction of the core of today's gleaming Capitol. This year marks the 200th anniversary of Congress' return to the restored, but still incomplete, Capitol.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

The Capitol was far from finished when the British burned it. The center section had not been built and only a wooden walkway connected the wings designated for the Senate and the House of Representatives. Delays and cost overruns had dogged the project since Congress authorized construction, according to the Architect of the Capitol's website (aoc.gov).

Empowered by the Residence Act of 1790, President George Washington picked the site for the District of Columbia in 1791 and named three commissioners to oversee the creation of a capital city. The commissioners hired French engineer Pierre Charles L'Enfant to plan the city and design its public buildings. He located the Capitol at the east end of the National Mall on a small rise known as Jenkins' Hill, which he described as "a pedestal waiting for a monument."

However, L'Enfant often clashed with the commissioners, and they fired him in February 1792. They then held a contest offering a \$500 prize for an acceptable Capitol design. They ultimately rejected all 17 submissions, but in October 1792 they allowed William Thornton, a physician from the British West Indies, to submit a late entry.

Thornton's design included the basic elements of today's Capitol. It had a low-domed central section with rectangular wings on either side for the House and Senate. The commissioners accepted Thornton's design on April 5, 1793, and President Washington laid the cornerstone on September 18, 1793.



A painting by George Munger, published in 1814, shows the U.S. Capitol after its burning by the British.



Circa-1796 rendering of William Thornton's winning design of the East elevation of the Capitol

After hiring and firing two more architects, the commissioners retained James Hoban, the architect of the President's House (only later referred to as the White House). Construction still ran far behind schedule and over budget, but Hoban managed to finish enough of the north wing by the end of 1800 for Congress, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress and the courts of the District of Columbia to move in on schedule.

In 1802, architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe succeeded Hoban. He made some design and construction changes that expedited the work. The south wing, reserved for the House, was ready for occupancy in 1807 and completed in 1811. Latrobe also began work on renovating and redesigning the north wing. However, funding dried up as the country began preparing for a possible war with England, and Latrobe resigned in 1813.

'THE HARBOR OF YANKEE DEMOCRACY'

The summer of 1814 was one of the hottest and driest that Washington, D.C., had seen in years. To the British troops who marched into Washington on August 24, 1814, conditions were perfect to carry out their orders to burn all public buildings.

The strike served as revenge for an American attack on the city of York (today's Toronto), the capital of Upper Canada. U.S. troops had plundered and burned public and private buildings, according to "The Burning of Washington," by Andrew Pitch on the website of the White House Historical Association (<http://whitehousehistory.org>). Washington, D.C., held little military value, but the British knew destroying its important buildings would strike a powerful psychological blow.

Under strict orders not to harm civilians or private property unless attacked, the soldiers went to work. Before torching the President's House, they feasted on a dinner that had been prepared for President James Madison and a number of his top military officers—a dinner that lay untouched because Madison and the rest had fled the city, according to "Washington Burning," by Andrew Cockburn in the September 2014 issue of *Harper's Magazine*.

At the Capitol, some British soldiers later said they were

surprised at the grandeur of its design and furnishings, Pitch wrote. As they departed, the troops reportedly scrawled "The Capitol and the Union lost by cowardice," on the walls.

The blaze at the Capitol was so hot that it cracked stone columns and melted glass oil lamps and hundreds of panes of glass. The

glow could be seen from 50 miles away. Fortunately, a violent thunderstorm swept in, dampening the blaze and minimizing the damage.

The British also torched the War Office and Treasury buildings. Remaining near the city overnight, the soldiers briefly returned the next morning to burn anything they had missed. The soldiers did little looting, but Washingtonians "went gleefully wild in an orgy of theft" from both public and private buildings, according to Pitch. When the British left later in the day on August 25, Pitch wrote, "Washingtonians returned to the ruins of the Capitol and the President's House to pick and pluck like vultures."

SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE GO?

According to the House of Representatives' online history (<https://history.house.gov>), the 13th Congress was not in session at the time of the attack. Members arriving in early September "found a terrorized community, most public buildings destroyed, and a humiliated army on retreat. Once the grandest building in North America, the unfinished Capitol resembled a charcoal briquette."

Fortunately, the British had spared the Patent Office, which is now the site of the National Portrait Gallery. Congress unhappily crowded into the small building, which had been Blodgett's Hotel up until 1802.

As Representative Richard Stockton of New Jersey described it, Congress was "in a room not large enough to furnish a seat for each member when all are present, although every spot up to the fireplaces and windows, is occupied." Stockton wondered if they could light fires when cold weather arrived and how they'd fare during Washington's legendarily hot, humid summer, according to *At Peace with All Their Neighbors: Catholics and Catholicism in the Nation's Capital, 1767-1860*, by William W. Warner (Georgetown University Press, 1994).

Shortly after Congress convened, Representative Jonathan Fisk of New York introduced a resolution to form a select committee to study temporarily moving the capital "to a place of greater security and less inconvenience than the City of Washington."

New York or Philadelphia would be safer from foreign attack, Fisk and his allies argued, and also closer to the country's established commercial centers. Washington was still a small town of about 8,000 people, and it lacked any of the sophistication or charm that a capital city should have.

Southern representatives chided their counterparts' lack of courage. Representative Joseph Pearson of North Carolina wondered "why the gentlemen from the North and East should be filled with apprehensions for their personal safety, while those from Southern and middle States ... should remain unappalled [sic]." Running away "will only give cause of triumph to the enemy," he added.

On October 3, 1814, the House voted 72-71 to approve Fisk's resolution creating a committee to study whether to move the capital to Philadelphia. The committee produced a bill that would have temporarily relocated the capital, but also pledged to authorize funds to rebuild Washington and bring the capital back once construction had finished. After much maneuvering and wrangling, the House in mid-October defeated the bill 83-74. The capital would remain in Washington.

A MOTIVATED CITIZENRY

Meanwhile, with the future of their city in doubt, Washingtonians acted quickly to convince Congress not to relocate. Bankers offered to lend Congress \$500,000 toward reconstructing public buildings, according to the House's history. Local citizens created a stock company to raise funds for a suitable temporary home until the Capitol could be rebuilt. They sold 17,362 shares for \$100 each, and on July 4, 1815, the cornerstone was laid for what became known as the Old Brick Capitol.

The hastily erected three-story building was ready for occupancy by December 1815. It provided Congress more room and better lighting than at the original capitol, according to Warner. On March 4, 1817, a new tradition began when James Monroe became the first president to take the oath of office and deliver the inaugural address outdoors in Washington, D.C.

Four years later, as Congress prepared to move into the partially restored Capitol, Representative William Darlington of



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



SLAVES BUILT 'THE TEMPLE OF LIBERTY'

When construction began on the capital city in 1793, the site was little more than a wide spot in a bad road. The area was sparsely populated, and workers were hard to find, especially men with specialized skills such as carpenters, masons and stonecutters.

Part of the solution was to "rent" slaves from local whites, according to the Architect of the Capitol. They quarried, shaped and moved stone; made and laid bricks; and did carpentry, among other construction tasks.

Not much is known about them. The National Archives has a 1795 promissory note to Jasper M. Jackson for hiring his slave "at the Capitol, from 1st April to 1st July 1795, 3 Months, at 5 Dollars per Month" for unspecified labor. The slaves lived in shacks on-site and were fed and cared for there. Sometimes they received some extra pay in addition to what their masters collected, according to the National Archives.

On February 28, 2012, Congress recognized their unheralded services with a marker that hangs in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center. The marker is a slab of Aquia Creek sandstone that was once part of the East Front Portico. Visitors can see the chisel marks left by workers who cut and shaped the slab.

A bronze plaque hanging next to the slab bears the inscription, "This sandstone was originally part of the United States Capitol's east front, constructed in 1824-1826. It was quarried by laborers, including enslaved African Americans, and commemorates their important role in building the Capitol."

An engraving shows the U.S. Capitol's first dome, designed by Charles Bulfinch.



spies. The building was demolished in 1929, and the U.S. Supreme Court complex now stands on its location.

THE WORK CONTINUES

In 1815, Congress approved funds to rebuild Washington's public buildings and rehired Latrobe to finish the Capitol, which he described as a "most magnificent ruin." As before, delays and cost overruns dogged the project. Latrobe resigned under pressure in late 1817, and Congress replaced him with Boston architect

Charles Bulfinch. By 1819, the north and south wings were ready for use by the Supreme Court, House and Senate.

Bulfinch then set to work on the center section of the building. His new design included a copper-clad wooden dome. Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams pressured Bulfinch to make the dome taller than he thought appropriate to the rest of the structure, according to the Architect of the Capitol's website. Bulfinch finished

construction on the Capitol in 1826 and spent the next three years working on furnishings and landscaping before resigning in 1829.

However, a growing nation began a growing government that required ever more space. In 1850, U.S. Sen. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi proposed legislation for an expansion that included replacing the old dome with the cast-iron dome that tops the Capitol today. The work continued off and on through the Civil War, and it was completed in 1868.


The U.S. Capitol remains a work in progress, always undergoing expansions, additions, repairs and renovations to keep pace with the ever-expanding size of government and the introduction of new technologies ranging from steam heat to digital communications.

The most recent major addition was the Capitol Visitor Center, completed in 2008. Located below the East Capitol Grounds, the underground Capitol Visitor Center has almost three-quarters the square-footage of the Capitol itself. 🐾

Pennsylvania tried one last time to relocate the capital. He introduced legislation to return the land that made up the federal district to Maryland and Virginia. The House never considered it.



After Congress moved out, the brick building was sold and used as a school and then as a boardinghouse. When the Civil War broke out, the government reacquired it and turned it into a Union prison for Confederate officers and

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TOMATOES

IN THE COLONIAL ERA

By Samantha Johnson



For many people, the burst of flavor from a juicy, sun-ripened tomato represents one of the premier tastes of the summer season. Many of us would be lost without pantry staples like salsa or marinara sauce, and it's impossible to enjoy a classic BLT without a thickly sliced tomato.

Tomatoes hold an undeniable and essential place in the modern culinary experience, but they traveled a hard road to reach this point. Legends abound in tomato lore, but the general belief in the Colonial era was simple: Tomatoes were poisonous, something you should not eat—or even want to eat.

FOR DECORATIVE USE ONLY

History points to the efforts of a few men—Thomas Jefferson, and friends John de Sequeyra and Philip Mazzei—who helped introduce tomatoes into the mainstream consciousness and alleviate the suspicions that shrouded this plant for at least two centuries.

The botanical name for tomatoes is *Solanum lycopersicum*. They belong to the Solanaceae (nightshade) family along with peppers, eggplant, potatoes and tobacco, among other plants. Another member of the family is belladonna, also known as deadly nightshade. This familial association was undoubtedly a contributing factor to the early belief that tomatoes were poisonous.

Tomatoes are native to South America. Explorers introduced them to Europe in the 15th or 16th century. When tomatoes first arrived in North America—their purpose and date of origin is widely debated—many grew them strictly as ornamental plants. Considering the delicate beauty of the tomato leaves, coupled with the petite yellow blossoms and vigorous vines—not to mention the gorgeous fruit—it's easy to see why the plant was valued as an ornamental, and why few perceived the nutritional and culinary value contained within the tomato's fruit. This is not to say that tomatoes were exclusively decorative in those days; occasional records and references indicate that a small percentage of early Americans ate tomatoes, though it was definitely not a common practice.

Early newspapers from the Colonial era make no mention of tomatoes, though advertisements from the late 1700s boast wondrous assortments of garden seeds, including onions, turnips, radishes and cucumbers.

HORTICULTURE HEROES

Jefferson is well-known for his efforts in horticulture and agriculture during his lifetime, and the tomato ranks among his finest contributions. He was fascinated with plants of all types, and he was especially fond of growing novelties in his garden. It's easy to imagine the appeal the somewhat mysterious tomato



Jefferson noticed the (strictly ornamental) tomato plants growing in the garden by the house. Aiming to disprove the idea that tomatoes were poisonous, Jefferson promptly PICKED A TOMATO FROM A NEARBY PLANT AND ATE IT—IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE.

held for Jefferson, who is said to have brought tomato seeds back to America after sampling tomatoes during a trip to Europe.

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation believes Jefferson was cultivating tomatoes in Virginia by 1781, and records show that he grew them throughout the early 1800s. He is believed to have encouraged his neighbors to grow “tomatas”—as he called them—as well.

One popular legend firmly puts Jefferson in the tomato spotlight. On a visit to the Miller-Claytor House in Lynchburg, Va., Jefferson noticed the (strictly ornamental) tomato plants growing in the garden by the house. Aiming to disprove the idea that tomatoes were poisonous, Jefferson promptly picked a tomato from a nearby plant and ate it—in front of an audience.

When it came to the promotion of tomatoes in early America, Jefferson is said to have given credit to a Williamsburg doctor named John de Sequeyra, who came to America from Europe in 1745. For more than 30 years he kept a detailed “account of Virginia diseases” in which he painstakingly

described maladies such as “intermittent fevers” and “hooping cough” (sic). He is also remembered for his work as chief physician at the first hospital for the mentally ill in Virginia.

Jefferson indicated that Sequeyra was actually the one who introduced tomatoes to Virginia, though it's unclear whether this is in reference to the seeds or simply the professional reassurance that the tomato wasn't poisonous. Sequeyra is even said to have declared that if a person ate a “sufficient” quantity of tomatoes, they “would never die,” according to Andrew F. Smith's *The Tomato in America: Early History, Culture, and Cookery* (University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

A mid-18th-century portrait of Sequeyra in the possession of a family for whom he worked as a physician included a handwritten note on the back that said: “He first introduced into Williamsburg the custom of eating tomatoes, until then considered more of a flower than a vegetable.”

In addition to Sequeyra's connection to tomatoes, historians also point to Philip Mazzei, a close friend of Jefferson. (Learn more about Mazzei in the November/December 2018 issue.) Mazzei had an intense interest in farming and gardening, and some believe that he was the one to bring tomato seeds to Virginia from Europe.

By the 19th century, people were beginning to recognize the potential for tomatoes. One of the first ketchup recipes was published in 1812. In the early 1830s, newspapers reported a possibility of making a “sauce” from tomatoes that “would keep through the year.”

We'll probably never know the exact timeline of tomatoes in early America or whether it was Jefferson, Sequeyra or Mazzei—or all three, or someone else entirely—whose efforts did the most to lift tomatoes to a higher culinary seat in America. Though we're not sure who should get credit for championing the tomato's cause in the early days of America, as we savor each bite of the beautiful fruit, we can also savor the mystery of its history. 🍅

Founding

BOATNIST

Seeking cures in nature, Dr. David Hosack inspired generations of physicians.

By Bill Hudgins



hundreds of people visit New York City's Rockefeller Center every day. "The Rock," on Fifth Avenue between 48th and 51st streets, is a cultural landmark and entertainment center world-famous for its architecture and art. Amid the bustle, it's easy to miss the unobtrusive bronze plaque in the middle of the center's Channel Gardens:

"In memory of David Hosack, 1769–1835. Botanist, Physician, Man of Science and Citizen of the World: On this site, he developed the famous Elgin Botanic Garden 1801–1811 for the advancement of medical research and the knowledge of plants." ~~~~~

Hosack is little-known today, apart from his place in historical trivia: He was the physician who in 1804 accompanied his friend and patient Alexander Hamilton to his duel with Vice President Aaron Burr—another patient and friend. Hosack then attended the mortally wounded Hamilton, as he had done in 1801 for the Founder's son, Philip, who also died in a duel.

Hosack was so much more than this.

A native of New York City, Hosack was a Renaissance man whose circle of acquaintances included the prisoners he attended in city jails, members of high society, esteemed intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean and U.S. presidents.

He was a polymath—a progressive physician whose occupations included midwifery, medical professor, biographer, historian and, perhaps foremost, botanist. While studying medicine and botany in Scotland and England, he became convinced that plants held more salubrious treatments for disease than those commonly used in America. England and other nations had established botanical gardens to draw out such secrets, but nothing like that existed back home. So Hosack began a quest to remedy that.

In her fascinating new biography, *American Eden: David Hosack, Botany, and Medicine in the Garden of the Early Republic* (Liveright, 2018), Victoria Johnson brings to life the New York of the early republic. Gotham was the nation's capital, still mostly crowded



into the southern tip of Manhattan Island but beginning to push past the village of Greenwich. To the north, streams flowed through meadows and fields where city dwellers went to escape fast-paced urban life. The first and second generations of Founders were still shaping the new nation, and Hosack ministered to many of them.

Exploring Nature's Pharmacopeia

Born in 1769, Hosack lived in New York City through the British occupation during the Revolutionary War. Washington Irving was one of his neighbors. At 17, he entered Columbia (formerly King's) College and began a lifelong friendship with DeWitt Clinton, nephew of New York Governor George Clinton.

Medicine fascinated Hosack, sparking his ambition to save lives and improve the health of his fellow New Yorkers. His studies included anatomy, and he was caught up with other medical students in the 1788 Doctors' Riot in which they protested the use of cadavers for dissection. (Read more in the January/February 2019 issue.) Early on, he resolved to remain strictly neutral in the heated debates between Federalists and Antifederalists. As a result, he built close professional and personal relationships in both camps.

When Philadelphia became the nation's capital in the fall of 1790, Hosack moved there to continue his medical studies at what is now the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania. After completing his degree, he married his first wife, Catherine Warner,

1810 painting of the Elgin Botanic Garden



WIKIPEDIA

whom he called Kitty. In 1791, they moved to Alexandria, Va., to be near the future capital city of Washington, D.C.

But Hosack still hungered for medical knowledge, so in 1792 he took Kitty and their new son, Alexander, to his parents' home in New York City and sailed for Edinburgh, Scotland, the epicenter of modern medical knowledge at that time. He left Scotland in May 1793 for London, which was "the botanical capital of the world," Johnson wrote. Studying one-on-one with the leading experts of the day such as Sir Joseph Banks, Hosack discovered medical botany, the field of using plants to make medicines.

Hosack had studied the medicinal properties of plants, Johnson wrote, but he was familiar only with dried, mostly imported items. The English cultivated entire gardens of healing botanicals and constantly experimented to find new efficacious plants, but botany was hardly known in America—a fact Hosack resolved to change.

Patriotism also propelled Hosack's quest, according to Johnson. For decades, Europeans had sneered at almost everything in the New World as being inferior to its European counterpart. Americans, of course, were eager to prove their homeland superior to the decadent Old World in every way. As he sailed home in 1793 after learning all he could about botany, he was convinced America would one day prove its superiority in this field.

Dreaming of Eden

Hosack opened his practice in his New York City home at 60 Maiden Lane, and in 1795 accepted a position as a botany professor at Columbia. He had brought home plant specimens from England, but, as Johnson put it, the nation needed "a new kind of garden—a botany classroom, chemical laboratory, apothecary shop, plant nursery, horticulture school, and lovely landscape all rolled into one."

In 1797, Hosack asked the Columbia trustees to fund a botanical garden. Engravings in books and dried specimens bored his students, he said, but a garden would engage them fully. The board agreed to give him 300 pounds, but the college was in bad shape financially, and the money never materialized.

In 1800, Hosack wrote his friend DeWitt Clinton, now a state senator in Albany, to help procure government funding. Clinton favored the proposal, but it was superseded by more pressing matters, including the contentious 1800 presidential election pitting Thomas Jefferson against the incumbent John Adams, according to Johnson.

Tired of waiting, in 1801 Hosack dug into his own funds to buy several city-owned parcels of land in rural Manhattan Island along what was called the Middle, or Bloomingdale, Road. He named it the Elgin Botanic Garden, in honor of his father's birthplace, Elgin, Scotland.

The site had a beautiful setting—he could see the East River and Long Island, as well as the Hudson River and the New Jersey Palisades below Weehawken. The land contained several types of soil, including a moist bottomland, Johnson wrote, and

an abundance of native species. It was perfect for his garden.

Over the next few years, Hosack poured much of his income into turning the bucolic spot into the kind of organized, orderly garden he had seen in England. His hired laborers, mostly newly arrived immigrants and jobless New Yorkers, built a porter's cottage near the front gates, blew up boulders, dug wells, plowed fields, and eventually erected a greenhouse and two hothouses.

Meanwhile, Hosack continued to lecture at Columbia while running his expanding medical practice and performing civic duties such as treating inmates at the city prison. He wrote everyone he could think of to ask them to send seeds and specimens of plants native to their homes. Hosack and his students began taking field trips to collect and learn about native flora.

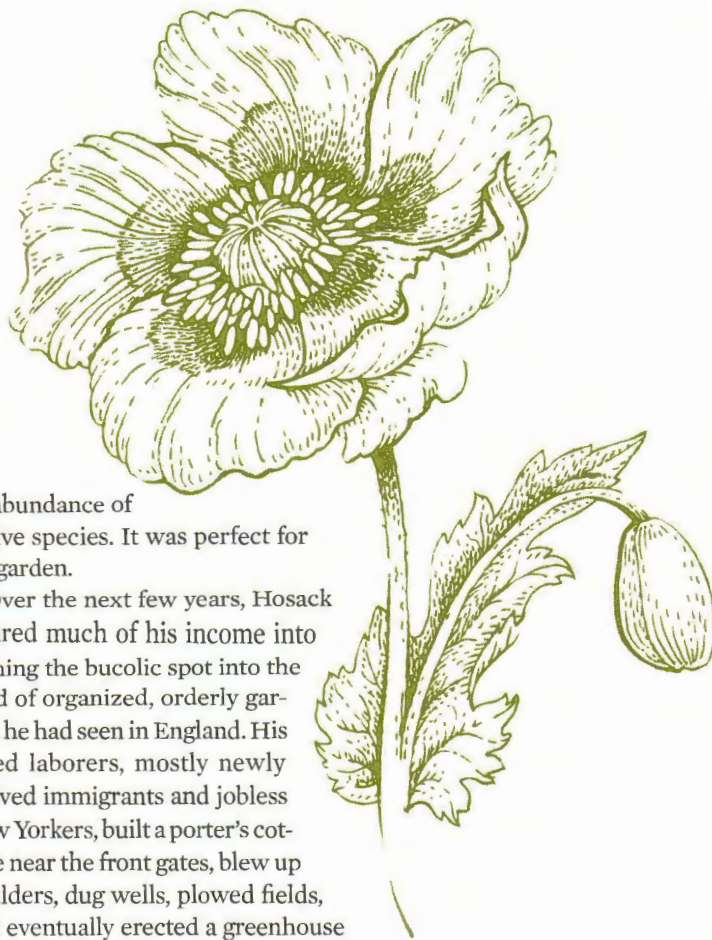
His world took a tragic turn on July 11, 1804, when Burr mortally wounded Hamilton in a duel on grounds outside Weehawken, N.J., across from the Elgin Garden. Hosack had reluctantly agreed to be Hamilton's attending physician. Burr concurred with the choice. After the duel, Hosack helped take Hamilton home and stayed by his side until he died on July 12.

Hosack also kept looking for financial support for his garden. From 1805 to 1809, he repeatedly sought funding from the state, which never came despite support from DeWitt Clinton, Gov. Morgan Lewis and other politically powerful friends.

Trying to keep his treasured project going, in 1807 he accepted a professorship at the new College of Physicians and Surgeons. He and his farm manager began growing vegetables and fruits for sale to generate additional cash. He also tried to enlist subscribers to defray the cost of maintaining and expanding the garden. It was never quite enough.

A False Spring

His luck seemed to change in March 1810, when the New York Assembly voted to buy the garden. The state appraised the Elgin Botanic Garden at \$103,137, or about \$2 million today,



according to Johnson. The estimate was probably low, as it ignored much of the labor, supplies and interest payments on loans Hosack had taken out.

The garden included species of trees, flowers, shrubs, grasses and grains from all over the world. The first edition of the Elgin Catalogue, published in 1806, listed more than 1,400 exotic species and 200 plants native to New York. Hosack published an updated catalogue in 1810.

The year 1811 marked the beginning of the end for the Elgin Botanic Garden. After politicians and influential rivals of Hosack attacked the appraisal as overly generous, the state reduced the amount by \$29,000. Hosack felt he had no choice but to accept. Crucially, the state did not include any funding for the garden's upkeep. Hosack was also forced to resign from Columbia due to his affiliation with its competitor, the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

The state took over the garden in January 1811, and in March stunned Hosack by giving it to the College of Physicians and Surgeons because "to imitate the garden of plants in Paris or another botanical institution of Europe would require too great an annual expenditure," Johnson noted.

The college entrusted the garden's upkeep to a caretaker, Michael

Dennison, who soon complained he was running up debts maintaining the site and needed more money. But when Hosack and two colleagues visited the garden in July 1813, it was a wreck. Carefully tended beds had overflowed their borders and invaded other plantings. Paths were untended, hothouse glass panes cracked or broken, and many of the rarer specimens missing.

Hosack tried unsuccessfully for several years to rescue his lost Eden. In 1814, the state took back the property from the College of Physicians and Surgeons and gave it to Columbia in lieu of giving the financially strapped school a much-needed loan. The state also ordered Columbia to build a new campus on the site.

Dennison continued to plunder the Elgin, while Columbia made plans to lease the land instead of relocating there. The legislature approved the scheme in 1819. Columbia subsequently sold most of the ornamental trees and shrubs to the New-York Hospital for its new mental hospital.

A New Garden Blossoms

Not only did the Elgin Botanic Garden suffer a sad, ignominious end, but Hosack also experienced personal tragedy. Kitty had died

in 1796. In December 1797, he married Mary Eddy, who died in 1824.

In 1825, Hosack married a third time, to Magdalena Coster, the widow of a man who had subscribed to the Elgin. He had four sons and three daughters at home, and she had seven children. She was also a wealthy widow, and the two soon became prominent in social circles.

Hosack continued his research into botanicals as well as his civic involvement. In 1828, he and Magdalena moved to an estate in Hyde Park in Dutchess County, N.Y., where Hosack soon created another garden spot without having to beg for funding or approval. Hosack died on December 22, 1835, of a stroke at his beloved farm.

In 1857, Columbia College moved into a new home one block from the Elgin grounds. The college divided the Elgin property into around 200 lots that it leased to developers. In 1928, John D. Rockefeller Jr. negotiated a deal to lease the property for \$3 million a year for a cultural and commercial project that would be called Rockefeller Center. Columbia sold the land to the Rockefeller Group in 1985 for \$400 million.

Hosack's enthusiasm for botany and his passionate advocacy for botanic gardens eventually bore fruit. The developing nation prided itself on being first in all

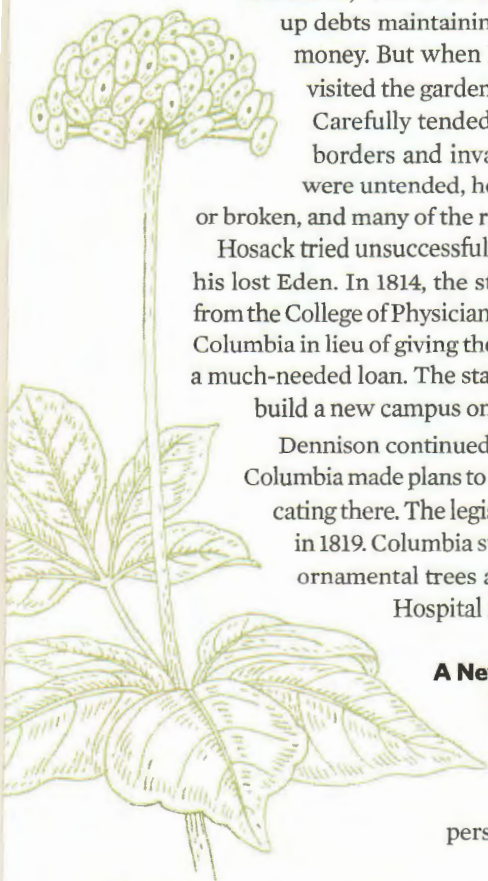
fields, and today many cities possess lovely botanic gardens. Plants have provided us with numerous medicines, and new discoveries continue. Many of his students excelled in medicine and science, and passed their discoveries and talents to new generations.

Johnson noted, however, that "his greatest legacy is perhaps the one that is hardest to see. He showed his fellow citizens how to build institutions." Hosack was a founder and a builder of civic organizations dedicated to improving the lives of everyday citizens.

His civic involvement included helping found the Lying-in Hospital for maternity patients; membership in and presidency of the Literary and Philosophical Society of New York; membership in the American Antiquarian Society in 1814; and work as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was one of the first Americans to be accorded full membership in the Fellows of the Royal Society in England and was a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

Some of these groups, such as the New York Horticultural Society and the New-York Historical Society, are still going strong more than two centuries later. Those efforts helped boost New York into a preeminent city, and in the process benefited untold millions. 🌿

Hosack Farm, once owned by David Hosack, is now preserved and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, visit www.hosackfarm.org.





Naturally Flavored

Brine, Sun and Air Power
J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works

Across continents and centuries, salt preoccupied entire civilizations. The crystalline commodity used in cooking, food preservation, medicine and industry seasoned strategic thinking about the locations of cities, taxation, wartime preparations, transportation infrastructure and more, its influence as widespread as its applications.

— By Courtney Peter —



Lewis Payne and Nancy Bruns in the company's large evaporation sun-house

Though no less a staple ingredient in modern life, salt is now affordable and ubiquitous enough to be taken for granted. But when producers put meticulous effort into preserving salt's primacy, the difference shows. At J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works, a family of seventh-generation salt-makers has revived the historic business that drew their ancestors to West Virginia's Kanawha Valley. There, they use sunshine and mountain air to transform brine from an ancient ocean beneath the Appalachian Mountains into crunchy, boldly flavored crystals.

Inspired by Family History

Although their Dickinson ancestors first drilled for brine more than 200 years ago, co-founders Nancy Bruns and Lewis Payne, the brother-and-sister team behind the modern incarnation of J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works, were industry newcomers when they decided to resurrect the family business. The idea came to Bruns during a period of transition, after



Four generations of the Dickinson family gathered to celebrate the launch of the new business in fall 2013.



Top to bottom: A large settling tank held brine drawn from the well, visible in the background, before the liquid moved into the furnaces. • A man holds a drill bit used to dig brine wells. • An aerial view of J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works.



she sold her small Highlands, N.C., restaurant and catering company in 2008.

"I really got interested in family history and became fascinated with the salt business," said Bruns, the company's CEO. Further inspired by her own specialty salt collection and the momentum of the farm-to-table movement, she explored the possibility of getting her family back into salt-making. "For about six months I sat on the idea, but it just wouldn't go away," she said. So she wrote a business plan and reached out to Payne, who quickly signed on as co-founder.

During the lengthy research and preparation phase that followed, Bruns and Payne studied family business records dating to the Kanawha Valley's heyday as the premier salt-producing region in the South.

Kanawha Salines

According to *e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia*, the Kanawha Salines salt-producing district encompassed a

10-mile stretch of the Kanawha River between Witcher Creek and the Kanawha City neighborhood of Charleston, W.Va., then part of Virginia. The area's salt deposits originate from the Iapetus Ocean, which was buried by the supercontinent Pangea hundreds of millions of years ago. A freshwater aquifer redissolved these deposits and sent a river of brine flowing beneath the valley.

Extraction began in the closing years of the 18th century, via hollowed tree trunks used as well pipes. Furnaces—wood-fired at first, but later fueled by coal—boiled the brine to isolate the salt. Technology improved quickly, and the industry boomed. By 1815, there were 55 small-scale salt furnaces sprinkled throughout the valley, according to Mark Kurlansky in *Salt: A World History* (Walker Books, 2002). As operations scaled in the ensuing decades, salt-makers increasingly relied on slave labor.

As the local industry crystallized, Kanawha salt-makers poured product through Charleston on to Cincinnati, the

Salt workers



center of the hog trade. Volume increased after the War of 1812. "The great opportunities for Kanawha salt came with the postwar Midwestern pork and beef industries," Kurlansky writes. "Kanawha salt was highly soluble and fast-penetrating, ideally suited for curing meat."

Output peaked in 1846, when the valley produced more than 3.2 million bushels of salt. But by the 1860s, the combined effects of a catastrophic flood, Civil War destruction, changing tariffs and steamboat shipping sent the industry into decline. Today, West Virginia is home to one single commercial salt-maker.

Salt Sellers

J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works, that solitary salt-maker, is part heritage company, part industry newcomer. William Dickinson of Bedford County, Va., invested in Kanawha

During the lengthy research and preparation phase that followed, Bruns and Payne studied family business records dating to the Kanawha Valley's heyday as the premier salt-producing region in the South.

Valley salt properties in 1813 and soon began making salt. In 1832, he moved to Malden, the epicenter of the local salt industry, to begin a new company named after his grandson, John Quincy Dickinson.

Today, Bruns runs J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works from that same property. (Another family business located elsewhere now commands Payne's attention.) "It's powerful, being back on this land where my ancestors worked," she said. "You feel the presence of the past. It pushes you that much harder to make the business successful."

Were those Dickinson ancestors to visit the current company headquarters, they would find a modern iteration of the original enterprise, which closed in 1945, instead of a faithful reproduction. Compared to the eight brine wells and 200 slaves the company employed in the 19th century, today's operation is much smaller, with just one well and 11 employees, most of them female.

The salt-making process has changed significantly, too. Instead of boiling brine



A Festival of Salt

September 28, 2019

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In 2017, J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works and the Charleston Convention and Visitors Bureau partnered to create the BB&T Malden Salt Fest, a free public event honoring the history of the Kanawha Valley. Held at the Dickinson farm, the daylong festival features local food, beer, wine and spirits, live music, period crafts, salt-making demonstrations and more. "It's important to us to keep the history of the salt-works alive because it's so important to the history of this valley," said J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works CEO Nancy Bruns.

to evaporate the liquid, yielding flat, fast-dissolving flakes, J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works utilizes solar evaporation. Salt made this way develops slowly, forming thicker, crunchier crystals that hold up better on food. The environmentally friendly process burns no fuel, relying instead on temperate, dry weather. July, August and September are the most productive months of the salt-making season, which runs from March through November.

Bruns and Payne spent the summer of 2013 perfecting the process, which is more labor intensive than its simple supply list suggests. Brine drawn to the surface spends a week in a settling tank before moving to evaporation beds in the sun-houses—essentially greenhouses adapted for salt-making. Once evaporation reaches a certain point, the brine is relocated to crystallization beds, where crystals start to take shape. Employees use birch wood tools made by local artisans to hand-rake the salt and scoop it onto cotton cloths to dry, then comb through the crystals with a scraper and tweezers to remove any foreign particles. In the summer, the whole process takes about four to six weeks.

In October 2013, J.Q. Dickinson's first harvest produced 400 pounds of salt. It sold out in three weeks. "We thought we had a lot of salt, then it was all gone," said Bruns, whose background in the food business helped place the product in gourmet retailers and fine restaurant kitchens across the country. This year, the company hopes to produce 20,000 pounds.

The business has grown in other ways, too. The 60-acre Dickinson farm hosts tours, weddings, special events and a monthly dinner series. In addition to hand-harvested artisanal salt, J.Q. Dickinson sells its own flavored salts, brine mix and caramel sauce. The company's latest project speaks to its mission to maintain strong regional ties. The J.Q. Dickinson Appalachian Mercantile, set to launch in the fall, will connect talented local makers to a wider audience by way of online sales and a subscription box.

For Bruns, J.Q. Dickinson Salt-Works represents not only a career rebirth, but also a creative outlet that combines her passions for food and family. "I'm very lucky to have found such meaningful work," she said. "I'm not going to get bored here." 🌿

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Nevis

History Has Its Eyes on Her

Rachel Fawcett Hamilton, mother to a future U.S. statesman, lived a short, dramatic life in the 18th-century West Indian islands of Nevis and St. Croix.

By Loren Broaddus

Born on the small Caribbean island of Nevis, the sister island to St. Kitts, around 1729 or 1730, Rachel Fawcett (also spelled Faucett or Faucette) experienced the fragile nature of life in the Leeward Islands, where hurricanes raged and slave labor fueled the bustling sugar cane economy. Her short life was full of disappointments, but she weathered the storms armed with intelligence, resiliency and a fierce streak of independence. From the shadows of Rachel's nearly forgotten existence emerged a young man who possessed many of his mother's traits. That man became the influential Founding Father Alexander Hamilton.

European Ancestry

Fleeing religious persecution in France, Rachel's Huguenot grandfather, Jean Fawcett, moved to Nevis. By 1718, Jean's son, John Fawcett IV, married an Englishwoman, Mary Uppington. Sources seem to indicate that John and Mary already had a daughter, Ann, when they married, which was fairly common in the 18th-century Caribbean. They went on to have six more children. Only Ann and Rachel, their youngest child, survived to adulthood.

Rachel grew up in two homes—one in Charlestown, the capital of Nevis, and another plantation home outside of town. Both most likely offered views of the Caribbean Sea. She was taught to read Greek and Roman classics and French literature.

By the time Rachel was 11, her childhood was uprooted by her parents' divorce. Her mother sued for the divorce and was granted custody of young Rachel. Ann, now grown and married, had moved to the Dutch island of St. Croix with her planter husband, James Lytton. Soon after the divorce, Mary moved with Rachel to St. Croix to be near Ann.

When Rachel was 16, her father died and left his estate to her. As one biographer surmises, the beautiful, well-educated and wealthy young woman must have been somewhat of a celebrity in St. Croix. It also appears that her mother wanted to advance Rachel's social prospects, and arranged for her to marry Johan Lavien (or Levine), who was more than twice her age. According to William Cissel, historian of the Christiansted National Historic Site, in his 2004 article "Alexander Hamilton: The West Indies Founding Father," Lavien, owner of a 75-acre cotton plantation, appeared to be a rich, desirable match.

Fraught Relationships

Biographers have speculated that the marriage was not a happy one. Lavien spent most of Rachel's inheritance to pay off his creditors and wasted the rest, falling even deeper in debt. It is also thought that Lavien emotionally and physically abused Rachel while the couple lived on a plantation ironically named Contentment.

By 1750, Rachel had run away from her husband, leaving her 4-year-old son, Peter, behind. Bitter and angry, Lavien



Rachel Fawcett Hamilton and her two sons, James Jr. and Alexander, were born in Nevis, the smaller of the two islands making up the nation of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

GETTY IMAGES

petitioned the Danish authorities to arrest her for adultery and desertion. Rachel was sent to jail in Fort Christiansted on Gallows Bay, where she spent several months in a 10-foot-by-13-foot cell. Upon release, Lavien believed Rachel would return to him meek and tamed, but she defied him again, fleeing St. Croix for Nevis.

Back in Nevis, she met James Hamilton, the fourth son of a Scottish nobleman. James, who was 11 years older than Rachel, is described by biographers as handsome, warm and undemanding. They eventually became common law husband and wife. Although they never formally married, they were routinely known as Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton in the community.

In 1753, James and Rachel had their first son, James Jr., and on January 11 in either 1755 or 1757 (historians differ on the year), their second son, Alexander, arrived. Alexander shared his father's Scottish physical traits of fair complexion and light eyes, yet he had his mother's personality. By age 5, Alexander was attending a local Hebrew school.

There is also evidence that at an early age, Alexander began to read voraciously from a set of 34 leather-bound books Rachel inherited from her father.

In 1759, Johan Lavien filed for divorce from Rachel in St. Croix, accusing his wife of "twice committing adultery and forgetting her duties as a wife." Rachel was summoned to defend her actions, but she never appeared. Historians disagree as to why. In his 2000 book *Alexander Hamilton, A Life*, Willard Sterne Randall wrote that Rachel

never knew of the summons. Ron Chernow, in his 2004 book *Alexander Hamilton*, asserted that Rachel was aware of the summons, but chose to ignore it. Regardless, her absence meant Lavien was legally granted everything—sole custody of Peter and permission to remarry. The court also declared that Rachel was forbidden to remarry and that any children born through another relationship would be considered illegitimate.

In 1765, the Hamiltons traveled back to Christiansted, St. Croix, so James could collect a debt for his employer. At this point, it's likely James and Rachel learned of the divorce and its terms. Soon after, James abandoned the family for reasons unknown.

Scandalized, Rachel was left alone in Christiansted, where she had been imprisoned 15 years earlier, with James Jr. and Alexander to raise. Her neighbors reported seeing still-beautiful Rachel, dressed in a red or white skirt, wearing a black sun hat, walking along the streets of Christiansted. She opened a small store at 34 Company Street, where she sold provisions to sugar planters. With young Alexander's help, she ran the store well, keeping proper books, settling accounts and staying out of debt.

On February 10, 1768, Rachel fell victim to a fever. Soon, Alexander became feverish as well. For a week, mother and

son lay side by side on the family's one bed, burning with fever and suffering from leeching and other medical treatments of the day. Alexander recovered, but Rachel died on February 19. It is said she was buried under mahogany trees on the Grange, her brother-in-law's plantation in St. Croix.

A New Beginning

Probate proceedings began the evening of Rachel's death. Her possessions included six silver spoons, two porcelain bowls, seven silver teaspoons with sugar tongs, a pair of chests, one bed, four dresses, one red skirt, one white skirt, one black sun hat and the set of leather-bound books. Lavien obtained these few valuables and auctioned them off. The illegitimacy of James Jr. and Alexander barred them from any inheritance.

Peter Lytton, the boys' cousin, purchased Alexander's favorite set of 34 books, and was awarded guardianship of the boys. Seventeen months later, Peter committed suicide, likely due to financial problems, and left nothing to the orphaned boys. Not long after, their uncle James Lytton died and left them out of his will as well.

James Jr. became an apprentice to a carpenter, and Alexander was taken in by a wealthy merchant named Thomas Stevens, whose son Edward was about the same age as Alexander. The two became lifelong friends, sharing interests, personalities, intelligence and even looks. Later in

life, statesman Timothy Pickering swore the two must be brothers.

Two more important men befriended a teenage Alexander. Nicholas Kruger hired Alexander at his import-export business Beekman and Kruger, where he learned about international trade and economics. Reverend Hugh Knox began tutoring young Alexander and quickly recognized his potential. Knox raised money from many leading citizens of St. Croix, including Kruger, Stevens, the probate judge and the town captain, who all wanted the gifted Hamilton to seek further education in America. The funds raised paid for transportation to Boston and, eventually, for tuition, room and board at King's College, now known as Columbia University, in New York City.

In October 1772, Alexander Hamilton boarded a ship bound for Boston, adventure just over the horizon. Never again would he see the searing beauty of the West Indies, where his mother spent her entire life. 🌿

Loren Broaddus, a history teacher at Kickapoo High School in Springfield, Mo., was the 2015 DAR Missouri History Teacher of the year. His book of poetry, *Joe DiMaggio Moves Like Liquid Light*, will be published in September 2019.



Alexander Hamilton's birthplace, circa 1900. A replica of the home was built in 1983 and now houses the Museum of Nevis History.



Eleazer Blake

Preserving the Treasures of a Revolutionary Eyewitness

— By Maureen Taylor —

On April 19, 1775, Eleazer Blake wrote the first entry in his diary: “Left to join the action.” For the next eight years, until his discharge on June 12, 1783, Blake recorded an account of his Revolutionary War experience, detailing his wartime activities and news of battles along with more mundane lists of supplies and weather observations.



Blake wrote frequently and often made comments on the action in the margins of his journal. Early on in the diary he remarked on a rumor that the British had taken over Boston’s Old South Meeting House and converted it into a riding school: “The house once set as a part for true worship of God has turned into a den for thieves,” he wrote.

Called to Service

Blake was born April 1, 1757, in Wrentham, Mass., to Ebenezer and Tamar (Thomson) Blake. In the mid-1770s, the teenage Blake was apprenticed to a wheelwright, a maker of wagon and carriage wheels. At 18, he left home as a member of a military company raised by his employer, Capt. Samuel Cowell. The men marched for 24 hours to arrive in Roxbury, Mass., on April 20, 1775. Blake didn’t return home until war’s end.

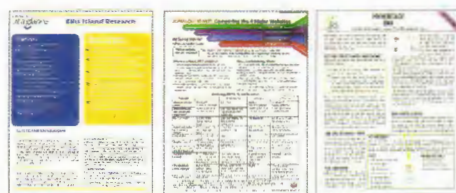
Blake served with various companies until May 19, 1777, when he joined the Continental Army under the command of Capt. Jonathan Felt. His pension application and diary claim he witnessed the battles of Bunker Hill, Monmouth and Saratoga, the burning of Charlestown, Mass., and winter at Valley Forge. He served in Rhode Island, too.

Blake was also present for the escape of Gen. Benedict Arnold and was a member of the guard for Arnold’s co-conspirator, Maj. John Andre. Blake even witnessed Andre’s execution.

Continued on page 48

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Each quicksheet is 4 pages, size: 8 1/2"x 11"



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The Rindge Museum's collection of Eleazer Blake artifacts includes his diary and discharge papers signed by George Washington.

Continued from page 46

While he began the war as a private, Blake moved up the ranks. He was a sergeant with the 12th Massachusetts Regiment under Col. William Shepherd. In 1782, he became the assistant quartermaster of the 4th Massachusetts Brigade. Those duties earned him a shilling a day. Like many other soldiers, he was only able to collect about half of those wages upon discharge. Released from service at New Windsor, N.Y., he then walked the 220 miles home to Wrentham.

Life After War

In 1785, he married Jerusha Gerould in Wrentham. Perhaps all his wartime travel made him restless. It wasn't long before Blake and his brother, Ebenezer, traveled to Vermont and New Hampshire, scouting a new place to live. Though they briefly lived in Stoddard, N.H., by 1792, Blake and Jerusha settled in the nearby rural town of Rindge, N.H., where they raised their five children. Blake worked as a farmer and a wheelwright and built his family's home, which still stands on Woodbound Road.

"There were a lot of Blakes in Rindge at that time," said Kenneth Raymond of the Rindge Historical Society. "The present-day western part of town was even called Blakeville once, and many Blakes were buried in the churchyard."

The churchyard belongs to the First Congregational Church, where Blake served as a deacon for 50 years until age 80. Raymond said Blake "would have witnessed all of the transformations of this building," including a major renovation in the 1840s, which was a sign of growth in the community.

In 1994, the Rindge (N.H.) Historical Society bought the circa-1815 Freeborn Stearns House near the town center and converted it into a museum to house its collection. The Rindge Museum is open Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-noon, on the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., or by appointment.

When Blake was 62 and in declining health, he applied to the federal government for a pension for his service. He had grown dependent on his teenage son and had to hire help for his ailing wife. To prove his financial need, he listed his belongings—the farm (worth \$417), one ox and two cows, along with farm implements. He made a successful case, and in 1818, he began receiving \$48 twice a year in recognition of his service as a sergeant. He appealed for an increase, stating he was an assistant quartermaster for the

last two years of the war, but that petition was denied. Even with all the personal materials in his possession, he lacked the official proof he needed.

More Memorabilia Than Most

For a simple farmer, he left behind an unusually rich collection of the remnants of his life, including three copies of the same photographic portrait. A toothless Blake posed for a daguerreotype likeness not long before his death in 1852. These shiny reflective images were sensitive to movement. The blurring in his portrait shows that he wasn't still. The Rindge Historical Society owns two oversize copies of the original, both large enough to hang in a parlor. While one is an exact duplicate of the daguerreotype, the other is enhanced with charcoal, making Blake look heavier and younger. These were the type of portraits usually ordered by descendants.

Blake's children and grandchildren also preserved some of his belongings. The Rindge Historical Society has his diary, signed powder horn and musket, and army discharge papers, signed by George Washington. The musket is thought to be the only remaining musket from Washington's camp in New Windsor. The original daguerreotype, the cane Blake was holding in the photo and other archival materials are owned by Fitzwilliam (N.H.) Historical Society, now housed in the circa-1837 home of his grandson Amos J. Blake.

Blake was revered in his community throughout his long life. According to an article in the July 31, 1851, edition of *New Hampshire Sentinel*: "We learn from a Rindge correspondent that Dea. Eleazer Blake, who 'served during the war' of the revolution, and LOW in his 95th year, is living in that town. He is said to retain his mental faculties to a remarkable degree—occasionally rides to church, a distance of nearly three miles, and is able to write quite legibly. Long life to the heroes of the Revolution!"

Maureen Taylor, the Photo Detective, is author of the two-volume series, *The Last Muster*. Learn more about Eleazer Blake in the film "Revolutionary Voices" at <https://vimeo.com/305864937>.



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